

THE
ATLANTIC MONTHLY

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FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY NUMBER

VERSES

Copy of verses wrote by Sir Henry Knatchbull, Bart., 1760

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

[THE following unpublished poem by James Russell Lowell, the first editor of the *Atlantic*, was written in September or October, 1857, the year of the founding of the magazine. In sending the verses to Charles Eliot Norton, through whose kindness they are here printed, Lowell wrote:—

“I enclose the autograph I half promised you. In reading the verses, you must not forget to remember the date at which they are supposed to have been written, though I have only succeeded in hitting the style here and there.”]

O, SHARE these flowers! thus Delia wrote,
And pinned upon a tree,
With her own hands, the dainty note
Addressed to you and me.

The trees were glad that saw her pass,
The turf embalmed her trace,
The brook flowed slow and smoothed a glass
To catch her fleeting face.

Next day the letters fair were flown;
Who stole them? Dryads, say?
By chilling Auster were they blown,
By Zephyr lured away?

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Perhaps some bird the leaf conveyed
To line her happier nest;
O lucky eggs that shall be laid
On such a bed to rest!

Perhaps some squirrel was the thief
To grace his hollow tree,
As with inscription and relief
Our galleries do we.

But no, the truth was simply this:
Young Strephon, wandering by,
Saw from the stem, with sudden bliss,
Fair Delia's ensign fly.

"And oh," he cried, "be mine the page
That Delia's hand hath prest,
Forgive, ye Gods, his harmless rage
Whom she hath robbed of rest!

"The slender lines her crowquill traced
To warn rude hands away,
Shall ne'er in bleak exposure taste
The chance of night and day;

"But with the bud she once let fall,
The ribbon that she wore,
Shall add to Cupid's chapel wall
One saintly relic more!"

THE LAUNCHING OF THE MAGAZINE

BY CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

IN the spring of 1857 I was in England. On the 23d of May, Lowell wrote to me,

"We are going to start a new magazine here in October. . . . The magazine is to be free without being fanatical, and we hope to unite in it all available talent of all modes of opinion. The magazine is to have opinions of its own and not be afraid to speak them. I think we shall be scholarly and gentlemanlike."

The publishers, as I soon learned, wished to obtain contributions for the new magazine from writers in England; and as I was about to return to America in the summer, I was asked to bring home such manuscripts as might be sent to me by their writers, who should receive instructions to forward them to me. Accordingly when I left England in July, I had several manuscripts in my charge. No one of them, so far as I remember, was written by a writer of such distinction that his name is familiar to the present generation; but the work of an author not yet eminent and perhaps never to become so is generally as precious to him as to the writer in highest repute.

At the end of the voyage in New York I saw all my luggage safely on the pier, and delivered it over to the driver of the hotel wagon with directions to bring it to the hotel to which I was going for the night; and I was dismayed when, on the arrival of the wagon at the hotel, the trunk containing the precious manuscripts, and much else of value, did not appear with the other pieces. The driver admitted that he had seen it on the pier, and thinking that he had overlooked it, returned to seek for it, but it was not to be found. An active search was made that day and the next in other hotels, and in the offices of the express companies. Advertisements of the loss, with offers of

reward for the return of the trunk, were put into the newspapers. Handbills of the same character were printed and sent to the police stations; but all to no avail. "The whole affair of the lost trunk," wrote Lowell to me toward the end of August, "is as melancholy as it is mysterious." But it had its compensations.

As the weeks went on, and the character of the new magazine defined itself with increasing distinctness, the publishers began to recognize that the accident relieved them from what might have been an embarrassment. It had intervened to save the editors from the ungracious duty of rejecting well-intended but unsatisfactory material. Another result not less fortunate was the recognition of the error of soliciting numerous contributions from foreign writers. The *Atlantic* was to depend for its success upon American writers. It was a curious fact, however, that the leading article in the first number was the sketch of an English author, Douglas Jerrold, who is hardly to be reckoned among the immortals, by an English writer — James Hannay — "who occupied," said Allibone in his invaluable dictionary, "a distinguished position as a writer of fiction;" but of whose numerous works not one is known to the readers of to-day. This article had escaped the ill-luck of being in my trunk.

In August Lowell wrote, —

"This reading endless manuscripts is hard work, and takes a great deal of time; but I have resolved that nothing shall go in which I have not first read. I wish to have nothing go in that will merely *do*, but I fear I cannot keep so high a standard. It is astonishing how much there is that leaps just short of the line of good, and drops into the

limbo of indifferent. However, Number One will be clever: Emerson, 'Illusions;' Prescott, 'Battle of Lepanto;' Longfellow, 'Santa Filomena;' Holmes, 'Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table;' Motley, 'Florentine Mosaics;' Mrs. Stowe, 'A Stowery;' Hannay, 'Reminiscences of Jerrold,' very good. I know that that is pretty well; but I tremble for Number Two. The names of the authors, you understand, are a secret."

His question in regard to the second number did not last long, and two months later he wrote:—

"The second number of *Maga.* will be out to-morrow, and it is a very good one—better than the first, which is what I wished, and I hope Number Three will be better yet. The song I wish the young lady to sing is, 'Mamma, I'm young, but I'm growin' yet.'"

No magazine could have had a more brilliant and prosperous start, or one which gave better promise for continued success. At the outset it depended largely for its cordial reception by the public upon the contributions of writers already eminent, the great writers of the middle of the century. As one by one these lights were extinguished, their places were not supplied by any of equal lustre. But while the higher ranks of literature, especially poetry, were thus depleted, there was a rapid increase of capable writers of abundant knowledge, and of trained faculty of thought and of expression, and of manifest talent. A democracy was substituting itself for the older aristocracy and with the usual result: the general level was raised, while but few conspicuous elevations lifted themselves above its surface.

This was, indeed, an early symptom of the enormous change in every field of thought—intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, and material—during the past fifty years, which makes a wider division between the beginning of the half-century and its end than is to be measured by the mere tale of years. The change marks a new era in the history of civilization, and

to an old man whose memories extend over the whole period, the difference between 1857 and 1907 seems like that between ancient and modern times.

Think for a moment of the conditions of the earlier date. Lincoln was unknown outside of Illinois. There was no Atlantic cable, no telephone. Our great war, which now seems so long ago, was yet unfought. These few facts are enough to serve as boundaries of the vast tract of history included in the half-century. Events momentous and impressive have crowded the years; but more significant than events has been the rapid and immense increase of knowledge, and the consequent change in the material conditions and intellectual outlook of the world.

In 1859 the *Origin of Species* was published, a book perhaps as important, not only in its immediate but in its remote effects, as any ever issued from the press. The doctrine of Evolution received from Darwin's work precisely that illustration and application required to change it from a questionable hypothesis to a verifiable theory,—a theory which, while affording a well-supported and effective explanation of the origin and process of the forms of life on the earth, was equally applicable to every part of the mighty drama of the universe. But though this theory now has not only been generally adopted by the more intelligent part of civilized mankind, but has been accepted widely as a popular creed, and although it has thus gained possession of the intellect of men, it has not yet possessed itself of their hearts or of their imaginations. They admit its authority, but their sentiment is not as yet touched by the vast change consequent on it in the relation of man to the universe and in his conception of the universe itself. This slowness of effect of new truths upon the sentiment of men is not strange. Perhaps the most striking example of it is that afforded by the Copernican theory of our solar system, which, although universally accepted as true, is still far from

controlling the sentiment and imagination. Take any thousand people to-day of the most intelligent to be found anywhere in the world, and although all of them will declare that they hold the Copernican system as established, yet probably nine-tenths of them still at heart, and so far as the sentiment of religion and of life is concerned, regard this earth as the centre of the universe and man as the chief object of creation.

In like manner with the theory of Evolution. While it holds sway in every field of science, and with such attractive force as to draw most of the vigorous and capable intellectual life of the time into these fields in pursuit of knowledge or of wealth, it still seems to affect but little the higher spiritual life of the mass of men. It has, indeed, been of incalculable benefit in loosening the bonds of superstition from the minds of men, but at the same time it has indirectly exerted a powerful influence tending, through the rapid and intoxicating advance of control of the great forces of nature and of the boundless sources of natural wealth, to the subordination of spiritual to material interests.

Thus, both directly and indirectly, it has had a disastrous effect upon pure literature, especially upon the literature of the pure imagination, upon poetry, and upon romance. To-day the writing about material things and of the daily affairs of men, of politics and of society, history, biography, voyages and travels, encyclopædias, and scientific treatises, far outweighs, in quality no less than in quantity, the literature of sentiment and

the imagination. The whole spiritual nature of man is finding but little, and for the most part only feeble and unsatisfactory, expression.

In poetry there is not to-day a single commanding voice. Now and then a transient note of power is heard, but the strongest are those which deal with and for the most part glorify material things. The great harpers of the House of Fame have departed. Orpheus, and Orion who sat "syde faste" by him, and Eacides Chiron, and the Bret Glascursion, have all left their seats, and only the

" . . . smale harpers with their gleees,"

who sat beneath them, remain, while afar from them are heard

"Many thousand tymès twelve
That maken loudè menstralcyes"

with

"Many a floute and liting-horne
And pypès made of grenè corne."

But this shall not be forever. The spirit in man is never wholly quenched. Romance never dies out of the world. The stars of night still shine to the souls of men. One generation after another may try to content itself with apples of the Dead Sea, but the time shall come when the quest of the fruit of the Tree of Life shall be undertaken again in earnest and with fair promise. Great harpers shall fill again the seats once occupied by Orpheus and Orion, and the later days of the *Atlantic Monthly*, in that perhaps still distant time, may be no less worthy of fame than when Emerson and Longfellow and Lowell and Whittier and Holmes were its regular contributors.

AN EARLY CONTRIBUTOR'S RECOLLECTIONS

BY JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE

IN the latter part of October, 1857, when the first number of the *Atlantic* had been out a day or two, I went one evening to take a hand at whist with Francis Henry Underwood, John Bartlett, and a young man I will call The Fourth Hand, who remarked as we took our places around the table, "Gentlemen, what say you? Let's not play whist! I'd rather spend the evening talking about the *Atlantic Monthly*."

If The Fourth Hand had been a projector of the magazine, like Underwood, or an intimate friend of both Underwood and Lowell, and as deep in their counsels as Bartlett, or a contributor (more or less humble) to the said initial number, like myself, the preference he expressed might seem natural enough. But as he was not of the literary set, — by occupation a salesman in a picture store, and not even an amateur author, — I was impressed by the proposal, and recall it now, as illustrative of the extraordinary interest excited by the appearance of the new periodical.

I was, for one, quite ready to talk about it, and should no doubt have been reconciled to passing a large part of the evening in discussing my own particular contribution to it. As this relates to an early phase of a movement that has become historic, I will give a little time to discussing it here and now.

Spiritualism was then a newly risen faith, — faith ancient as the longing hearts and eager gaze of mortals, faith forever rising and declining, but at that time amazingly ascendant, although very near our earthly horizon, and struggling in clouds so aflame with it as often to be mistaken for the source of light they veiled. My story was "Pendlam, a Modern Reformer," a satire aimed not at

spiritualism itself, which I forbore to mention in the narrative, but at the follies and impostures that flaunted in its train, and cast discredit on the cause with which they claimed kinship. These I detested all the more because I was something of a spiritualist myself; nor was my opposition to them lessened by the circumstance that near friends of mine were, as it seemed to me, dangerously tolerant of such pretensions and delusions. The brotherly watch I kept over them, and my own prolonged experiences as an earnest student of the "manifestations," gave me exceptional advantages as an observer of the peculiar social ferment, which I believed myself better fitted to understand than any who were wholly in it and whirled by it, or who viewed it coldly and scornfully from the outside.

Such was the situation that furnished the motive for my story. Strange as it seems to me now, glancing again over its pages after an interval of fifty years, the wildest schemes and most incredible vagaries described in it were not imaginary, but had their counterparts in conditions of which I was personally cognizant. It calls up, with the fidelity of a fadeless photograph, one of the old-time meetings of the Disciples of Freedom (as I called my reformers), in the Melodeon (the well-known hall on Washington street), "crowded with one of those stifling audiences for which no ventilation seemed availing;" lank stalks of humanity "raked from unheard-of outlandish stubbles;" the zealous and the credulous, the curious and the skeptical, the youthful with the gray-haired; on the platform speakers wise or unwise, guileless or designing, who poured forth platitudes or absurdities, beautiful inspirations or

frothy denunciations. I did not depict either of my friends in the characters of the story. Pendlam and his Susan and the wreck of their married life were entirely fictitious; but as types of persons and tendencies they were as entirely true. Pendlam represented a class of sincere, but over-zealous enthusiasts, who forgot reason and prudence in their pursuit of the latest vagaries in magnetisms and influences, impressions and communications, mediumistic or psychic, or whatever the terms were in the cant of the period. They swung from one belief to another in a manner hinted in the name of my hero, — Pendlam, short for *pendulum*, — although I am not aware that anybody heeded the suggestion. Beginning as a preacher and temperance reformer, he passed through kaleidoscopic changes of faith and morals, until, wearied and worn with his own errors and failures, he ended in celibacy and Catholicism. "The tossed voyager, failing to make the continent of truth, but beating hither and thither amid the reefs and breakers of dangerous coasts, mistaking many islands for the main, and drifting on unknown seas, had at last steered straight to the old Catholic shores from which the great discoverers sailed so many years before."

Neither of the "disciples" typified had done just this thing at that time, but the conclusion seemed prophetic of two of them, a married couple who separated amicably in order to follow each his or her "affinity," and after many wanderings came together again to join a community of Shakers, whose manner of life they finally deemed the best — until they tried it.

The subject of my contribution, and the fact that the writer was well known in spiritualistic circles, caused it to be talked of at the time; and I was grieved to find that the near friends I speak of were keenly hurt by it. It was so true to my deepest convictions and kindest intentions that I could not regret having written it; yet I do not now recall any

other reason than to spare them further pain, which I may have had for omitting it from my volume of *Coupon Bonds and Other Stories*, published a few years later.

I followed my first contribution with others in verse and prose (oftener in verse than in prose in those earliest years), one of which had an adventure so unusual that it may bear relating.

This was a story of New England country life, which was accepted, sent to the printers, and returned to me in proof-sheets with a gratifying promptness that augured well of the editorial approval. The sheets had already been corrected by Lowell, and they bore, moreover, in the handwriting always delightful to my eyes, little marginal comments inspired by his learning or fancy; as when, against the exclamation "Law suz!" used by one of my female characters, he suggested, "probably a contraction of 'Lord save us.'" In my lodgings in Seaver Place I was one morning reading the proofs, — pleased to see how well the thing looked in type, and smiling, no doubt, at the marks of Lowell's interest in it, — when a hurried note came by messenger from Underwood, saying that Lowell had, upon reflection, decided that "it could n't go in."

In twenty minutes I was confronting Underwood in the Winter Street office.

"Can't go into what?" I said; "the next number?"

"It can't go into the magazine at all!" he replied, evidently as much disturbed by the incident as I was.

"But it has gone in!" I said. "Here are the numbered pages! You don't put rejected articles into type, do you?"

Not often, he hoped, if he was to stand between authors and the editor-in-chief! He went on to say that Lowell's objection was an afterthought, and that it was made solely from a moral, not a literary point of view. I listened in no little wonderment as to how my innocent pen had been betrayed into anything morally offensive, and drew a breath of relief when I heard the explanation. I had

allowed my principal character to accept money from his father in a manner that might befit the scamp of a piece, but not the hero! The unfitness had not occurred to Lowell when he read the manuscript, nor had he given it much thought in correcting the proofs; but it had haunted him since, and he had suddenly made up his mind, — “and he is firm as Rhadamanthus!” declared Underwood, who had remonstrated in vain against the verdict.

As my hero was not much of a “hero,” but a very common mortal in a situation meant to be comic, and as Lowell himself had not thought seriously of the objectionable transaction until after he had not only passed it in the manuscript but actually in the proofs, I considered his final act as inconsistent, and rather unfair to the author. But I merely said, “Very well; where is my manuscript?”

Underwood thereupon took from his desk the original copy, and “copy” it was in the fullest sense of the printer’s term, disfigured forever by smooches of the compositor’s type-soiled digits. He expressed regret at its unpresentableness, knowing well that it could not go in that dishonored state to another editor, and that the proofs would be alike unavailable for any such purpose. I said, “I can rewrite it, — I have nothing else to do!” and walked stiffly out of the office.

I was confident that with a stroke of the pen I could obviate Lowell’s objection, if his Rhadamanthine attitude did not render him too unreasonably fastidious. But if he had not himself seen that possibility, I was not in a mood to suggest it, or to re-submit the story to him with any seeming solicitation on my part.

I transcribed it that afternoon and evening, and sent it the next day to *Harper’s Magazine*, by which it was accepted and put into type about as promptly as it had been by the *Atlantic*. Soon after its publication Underwood, being in New York, called on Charles

F. Briggs, Lowell’s confidential friend, to whom the poet had made the amazing gift of *A Fable for Critics*, ten years or so before. Lowell was desirous of getting from that experienced editor and accomplished man of letters any suggestions he might have to make regarding the *Atlantic Monthly*. This Briggs praised duly, but with the qualifying remark, “What you want is more good story-writers.”

“We can’t get them,” said Underwood.

Briggs then asked, “Who is the writer of this story in the last *Harper’s*?” — which he proceeded to characterize as he took the magazine from his table, — “‘Nancy Blynn’s Lovers.’ Can’t you get him?”

Underwood thereupon told how that renegade story of mine had been accepted for the *Atlantic*, put into type, and finally cast out by Lowell.

“You incomparable idiots!” Briggs ejaculated. “Do you go in when it rains?”

On his return from New York, Underwood reported to me this conversation, and also to Lowell, who I dare say was less amused by it than I was.

The incident did not in the least degree diminish my regard for the conscientious editor, or my very great admiration and liking for the writer and the man. I was indeed sincerely sorry that any contribution of mine should have caused him the slightest uneasiness or needless trouble. The subject was not directly mentioned by either of us when next we met, but in some way the conversation led to rejected contributions, and I remember his relating a serio-comic adventure he had recently had with a hatful of them. He was walking one windy morning over Cambridge bridge, when his hat blew off, and fell into the Charles, with half a dozen or more manuscripts with which it was freighted, and which he was returning to the Boston office. A boatman recovered the hat, but the scattered manuscripts perished in those waves of

oblivion. "If they had been accepted articles," Lowell remarked, "it would n't have been quite so bad; for we might with some grace ask the writers for fresh copies. But how can you tell a self-respecting contributor that his manuscript has been not only rejected, but sent to a watery grave!"

My relations with editors have almost invariably been harmonious. They have been entirely so, from first to last, with the conductors of the *Atlantic*; and I have had dealings with all of these, except perhaps with the one whose term of office was the briefest. I have always accepted with cheerful acquiescence the editorial point of view, even when most adverse to my own; and I wish to avow here my frequent and very great indebtedness to wise editorial suggestions. I might adduce instances of this that have occurred in the recent years of this magazine; but there may be less imprudence in going back for examples to an earlier administration. In the spring of 1864, at a time of domestic affliction, I chanced one evening to pass the doors of a Boston theatre when it was resounding with the plaudits of the audience over some scene in a play piratically dramatized from one of my own novels; and returned to my broken home with the shouts still ringing in my ears. Such a contrast between the public show and the private reality left a strong impression on me; so that when, eight years later, I wrote "Author's Night," embodying that and other experiences and recollections of the stage, I gave the piece a tragical ending. This story in verse I sent to Mr. Howells, who pronounced it "fresh, vivid, and real," but protested against the sad conclusion. I saw at once how entirely right he was, rewrote the latter part of the piece, and returned the whole to him in the final form in which it soon after appeared, immensely improved in accordance with his suggestion. Some time after that I sent him a short story, the motive of which he thought worthy of much more

expanded and elaborate treatment. I recast it, upon his recommendation, turning the brief prose sketch into a narrative poem of over six hundred lines; which, however, I did not offer to him, as I wished it to receive magazine illustrations that might be used with it in book-form. So it went to New York, and had good fortune as *The Book of Gold*.

It may be no more indiscreet than much I am here recording, to relate how very near I once was to becoming Lowell's editorial assistant. Calling one day at the Winter Street bookstore, I found Underwood so unhappy over some mysterious occurrence that he could hardly speak; he merely gripped my hand, and murmuring a word or two of greeting, put on his hat and went out. Greatly perplexed, I entered Mr. Phillips's room, and finding him alone, asked, "What is the matter with Frank?"

He beckoned me to close the door and draw a chair near his desk; then said, "Mr. Underwood has resigned his situation in this house."

When I expressed my astonishment, and inquired what the trouble was, he merely replied that a crisis had come in some matter he was n't quite ready to explain; adding, with a grimmish sort of smile which I well remember, "He did n't believe his resignation would be accepted, but it was, so quickly it took his breath away!"

"Impossible!" I said.

But he answered firmly, "It is irrevocable!"

Still greater was my amazement when he went on to say, "It is so fully decided, I am already thinking of his successor." After some further conversation which he charged me to regard as strictly confidential, he ended with, "If things go as I am sure they are going, there is nobody I'd sooner see in his place than yourself;" the full meaning of which was, that I might become the firm's "literary adviser."

If in the surprise of the moment my

concern for my friend's interests became confused in the sudden looming up of my own, I was careful not to let any selfish considerations influence my conduct. I insisted that I did not believe he would go. I said, "I don't see how he *can* go; but if he does, I shall of course be glad to talk with you further." I did not visit the bookstore again for two or three days, thinking it best to keep entirely out of its disturbed atmosphere until the little storm was over. When I next looked in, I found Underwood cheerful, and Phillips sedately smiling.

"Just as I told you!" I reminded the head of the house.

"You were right," he said succinctly. "Lowell came in and patched it up. He was the only man that could do it!"

It was, no doubt, this affair that Lowell alluded to when he wrote to Richard Grant White (letter of April 6, 1859, printed by Scudder): "Your letter came just in the midst of a bother in the *Atlantic*, which it took all my diplomacy to settle so that both sides should not bite their own noses off, to which mad meal they had evident appetites. It is all 'fixed' now, and things go smoothly again."

A series of three papers published in the second year of the magazine are of especial interest to me, as they recall how barely at one time I escaped being something very different from the firm's adviser and Lowell's assistant.

Early in 1857 the Mormons in their new state of "Deseret" had shown themselves so defiant of Federal authority that it became necessary to send out a strong military force to crush the incipient rebellion. This force was to leave Fort Leavenworth in June or July, cross the Plains (a phrase of sinister significance in those days), and reach Salt Lake City early in the autumn. Closely following the news that the movement had at last been decided upon by Buchanan's vacillating administration, came a proposal from the New York *Tribune* that I should accompany the expedition as correspond-

ent of that paper; a proposal which my desire for employment and readiness for adventure would have made me eager to accept. Fortunately for me, perhaps, it was not sent to me directly, but through the hands of the encyclopædic Robert Carter, then the *Tribune's* Boston representative. Carter had a young friend and protégé, Albert G. Browne, a sturdy and capable fellow, whom he at once, in reply to the *Tribune* people, recommended for the appointment, without even giving me a chance to consider it. I forgave this act of Carter's at the time, and afterwards had reason to be rather glad of it, on learning what hardships befell the expedition, when, in the following winter, it so narrowly missed the fate of Napoleon's army in its retreat from Russia. Browne accompanied it in my place, and wrote an excellent account of it, which appeared in the March, April, and May numbers of 1859, — a history I used to fancy I might have written myself but for Carter's interposition. Browne had a more robust constitution than mine, a fact that may have influenced the elder man in choosing between us; and, looking back now upon the event, I am inclined to think that, if I had gone with the expedition, I should not have been in the way of writing that history, or ever anything else, after the terrible Utah business.

The editors must indeed have experienced a dearth of "good story-writers," else they would hardly have risked beginning to print, in the very first *Atlantic*, a serial by a writer little known, of which they had only three or four chapters in hand. This hazard they incurred in the case of C. W. Philleo's "Akin by Marriage," of which I remember little more than that it was nicknamed "Ach'ny by Marriage" by jocular readers, and that all jocularities regarding it soon ceased, in the sudden eclipse that befell both story and writer. He was to furnish the installments month by month, — nearly always an unwise plan for editor and author. They ran three months; and at the close of the January installment

(1858) appeared the usual notice, "To be continued in the next number." But there was to be no "next" for the serial, although all who knew him augured confidently a far happier Next Number for the amiable invalid, who passed on into that other life almost as his hand let fall the pen on an unfinished page of his story.

Besides "Akin by Marriage," Mrs. Stowe's "The Morning Veil" (which she sent at the last moment in place of the opening chapters of a novel that was expected of her), and my own "Pendlam," the first *Atlantic* had in the way of fiction a story entitled "Sally Parson's Duty," which should have satisfied even the exacting Briggs. The writer was Miss Rose Terry, one of the pioneer delineators of humble New England life; she had wit, pathos, a firm-fibred style, and certainty of touch. Her stories were true to character and dialect, and genuinely humorous, without any of the Sam Slick style of caricature that had been so popular earlier in the century; they were equally free from lapses into improbable and strained situations, such as have marred the work of more distinguished successors in the same field. Her contributions were frequent through all the early years of the magazine, and continued after the familiar name of Rose Terry was changed to Rose Terry Cooke; ceasing in 1876, to the regret of judicious readers.

The most noteworthy of all the early stories appeared in the second year of the magazine (Feb., 1859), and attracted immediate and extraordinary attention. The scene of it was laid chiefly in Paris, with the life of which city the writer seemed easily familiar. The plot, as I remember,—and I recall few of those early contributions so distinctly,—turned upon the hero's adventures in the recovery of a diamond of fabulous value and a wonderful history. It had been mysteriously and very adroitly stolen, but an imperfect verbal clue led him rightly to believe it to be concealed "in a cellar,"—not a wine-cellar, as he for a while

supposes, but actually a *salt-cellar*, which he manages to intercept at the table of a distinguished hostess, and dramatically to upset under the eyes of two baffled conspirators. There were weak points in the construction, but "In a Cellar" was none the less a deft performance, distinguished by freshness of poetic perception and charm of style,—altogether surprising as the production of a hitherto unknown hand. The surprise became wonder when we were told that the said hand was small, and feminine, and inexperienced,—the hand of a young girl who had never seen a foreign shore, and knew little of the world outside of books and her own magical imagination. Underwood boasted of the story in advance of its publication, and said Lowell was in high editorial glee over it, although a little suspicious at first of its being a clever adaptation from the French,—a dazzling imposture! Its author was "a Miss Prescott of Newburyport," still in her teens, according to first reports, but really, as ascertained later, "in the early twenties." What Lowell thought of the newly discovered writer may be inferred from the fact that she was nominated by him for the distinction of keeping Mrs. Stowe in countenance at the famous *Atlantic* dinner,—much gossiped about then and written about since,—to which no other "lady contributor" had the honor of an invitation.

"In a Cellar" was followed in later numbers by other stories from the same pen,—none to my mind quite so striking or of such ingenuity of plot, but all marked by the same imaginative vivacity and affluence of diction, sometimes even showing a tendency to excess in those admirable qualities. In writing editorially of her first book, *Sir Rohan's Ghost*, Lowell declared (February, 1860), "It is very plain that we have got a new poet;" and "It is our deliberate judgment that no first volume by any author has ever been published in America showing more undoubted [*sic*] symptoms of genuine poetic power than this."

In 1865 Miss Harriet Prescott became Mrs. Harriet Prescott Spofford; under which name her contributions to periodical literature have continued, in prose and verse, through all the intervening years.

The June number of 1858 led off with the first of a series of three papers descriptive of a trip to the wilds of Maine, — inevitably challenging comparison with Lowell's own "Moosehead Journal," which had appeared in the old *Putnam's Monthly*, four or five years before, and had astonished magazine readers by its delightful humor and wit and fancy. These qualities "Chesuncook" likewise had, but of a dryer, quainter, less exuberant sort. The writer, Henry David Thoreau, had published two volumes, — his *Week*, which had fallen literally dead from the press (if any work so vital in thought and observation could be called dead), and the more remarkable *Walden*, which strongly impressed the author's small but select and ever enlarging circle of readers. Outside that circle "Chesuncook" was not much cared for by the patrons of the magazine, but there was one person who did not undervalue it, the author himself, who thought it ought to be paid for at the rate allowed Emerson for his starlit essays. But the office did not think so, and he had to be content with the five or six dollars a page received by the rank-and-file of contributors, — truly liberal compensation in those days.

"Chesuncook" was Thoreau's sole contribution. But in 1862, after he had got through with this world and passed on to make trial of the next ("One world at a time!" he said on his death-bed to some one who wished to talk to him of a future life), "Walking" appeared (in the June number), to be followed by more of his characteristic essays in the three or four succeeding years. He left manuscripts enough to make many volumes, which have been well edited and duly published, and have even achieved the popularity he affected to despise. *Wal-*

den is a classic, the still-born *Week* has been reprinted in successive editions; he lives for us in a whole shelf-full of books which "no library is complete without;" a fortune amazingly in contrast with that of so many writers of those years, whose reputations have hardly survived them, even when they have not survived their reputations.

In those early anonymous days there appeared in the *Atlantic* (October, 1859) a poem on a rather hackneyed subject, "Old Papers," which however was relieved from commonplaceness by genuine feeling and vigor of expression. If any one had taken the trouble to inquire into the authorship (which I doubt that any one ever did), he might have been the first to discover Henry Howard Brownell, of Hartford, Connecticut, — a scholarly writer who had remained in obscurity until his fortieth year, but whom an extraordinary opportunity awaited. He had been educated for the law and been admitted to the bar, but had turned his back on clients (if there were any to turn his back on), and betaken himself to literature. He had put forth a volume of *Poems* which nobody seemed to have heard of, and had written popular histories for a subscription-book publisher, whom I got to know later, and who regarded me with amused incredulity when I told him his hack-writer was a genius.

I have often thought that the uplift of enthusiasm and incentive which the Civil War brought to so many was a leaven to the whole nation, that more than compensated for all the tremendous cost. It brought a fresh inspiration to Brownell. He wrote patriotic pieces, serious, scornful, or humorous, that went the "rounds of the press," one of which met with surprising good fortune. This was a metrical version of Farragut's "General Orders" issued to his fleet April 4, 1862, before the famous "river fight" that brought New Orleans back into the Union; a version in which naval terms were swung into rhyme with as

much freedom and force and skill as if it had been written at a white heat by some sailor-bard on a battleship. This remarkable "tour de force" attracted the attention of Farragut himself and brought from him a letter to the author. A correspondence ensued that resulted in Brownell's entering the navy as acting ensign on the flagship — really in the capacity of Farragut's private secretary — some time in 1863 (I do not recall the precise date). He had expressed a wish to witness a naval battle, and the grim old commodore (not yet admiral) had replied that he would gratify him.

Brownell could not, therefore, — surprising as it seems, — have witnessed the engagement described in the first of his two great battle-pieces ("The River Fight"), which occurred April 24 and 25, 1862. The poem may, however, have been written after he joined Farragut, and while he was with him on the Mississippi; which circumstance would account for the first-hand knowledge apparent in it, and its vivid realism. The poet who, before setting foot on a quarter-deck, could turn "General Orders" into ringing rhythm, might surely, after witnessing minor naval operations, be capable of fusing into fiery verse the battle scenes he heard talked over familiarly by those who had taken a foremost part in them. This supposition likewise accounts for the fact of "The River Fight" having been first printed in an obscure southern (Union) paper, the New Orleans *Era*, a sheet that must have been a frequent welcome visitant on board our cruisers in the Mississippi.

In this light — now for the first time, I think, thrown upon Brownell's battle-pieces — it is curious to note that it was the landsman-poet's "General Orders" that probably decided the metre and manner of "The River Fight," and of the still more astounding "Bay Fight" that came later, describing the battle of Mobile Bay, at which he certainly was present. In the former poem, "General Orders" is incorporated so skillfully that

it seems a part of the original composition; although Dr. Holmes, with his keen perception of form and feeling of dramatic movement, pronounced it out of place there, as serving to distract the reader from the main narrative. He thought (I am quoting from his *Atlantic* paper on "Our Battle Laureate") that it might better have been "printed by itself," seemingly unaware that it had been so printed originally, and even overlooking the fact that it likewise so appeared on a previous page of the edition of Brownell's poems that must have been under his eyes as he wrote.

A copy of this edition I have now before me, — a presentation copy from the poet, neatly inscribed with "the author's compliments" on the fly-leaf, and in two of the war poems having emendations of the text made in the same scholarly hand, — not at all the hand one would imagine must have written the poems themselves with a pen of fire.

A few things regarding this thin volume with a green cover seem worth considering. It is a "second edition," published by Carleton, New York, in 1864; and it bears the title, *Lyrics of a Day, or Newspaper Poetry, by a Volunteer in the U. S. Service*; which seems to indicate the author's own modest opinion of his work as anything likely to endure. The copyright notice has the author's full name, Henry Howard Brownell, and the year of entry is 1863; although, singularly enough, the last eighteen pages are given to "The Bay Fight," which bears date "U. S. Flag Ship Hartford, Mobile Bay, 1864." These eighteen, together with the previous twenty-five pages (including "The River Fight"), have evidently been clapped upon the back of a first edition, without regard to the copyright entry, which of course does not cover them.

It was this second edition that fell into the hands of the Autocrat, and incited him to write the notable paper I quote from (*Atlantic* for May, 1865),

in which he acclaimed as "Our Battle Laureate" the man who in his twenty years of authorship had hitherto achieved only a newspaper reputation. "If Drayton had fought at Agincourt, if Campbell had held a sabre at Hohenlinden, if Scott had been in the saddle with Marmion, if Tennyson had charged with the Six Hundred at Balaklava, each of these poets might possibly have pictured what he said as faithfully and as fearfully as Mr. Brownell has painted the sea-fights in which he took part as a combatant. The two great battle-poems begin, each of them, with beautiful descriptive lines, move on with gradually kindling fire, reach the highest intensity of action, till the words themselves have the weight and the rush of shot and shell, and the verses seem aflame with the passion of the conflict."

This is the keynote of the Doctor's acclaim, which, although enthusiastic, was surely not extravagant in its praise, — for where else in all literature shall we find the terrible excitement of a mighty conflict conveyed in four such lines as these from "The Bay Fight," which I give as a sample of Brownell's power of compressed expression? —

Fear? A forgotten form!
Death? A dream of the eyes!
We were atoms in God's great storm
That roared through the angry skies.

Such a paper, from such an authority, appearing in a periodical of highest literary standing, was sure to attract attention, all the greater because it was at a time of tremendous patriotic exaltation: Richmond had fallen, Lincoln had just been assassinated, and the minds of men were in a tumult of righteous wrath and wild jubilation. Readers of the magazine, especially a few of us who wrote for it, turned from the discussion of the close of the Rebellion and the death of the President, to ask each other, when we met, — "Have you read the May number?" "Seen Holmes's article on 'Our Battle Laureate'?" "Who is this Brownell, anyway, and where can you get his

book?" And I remember how curious at least one of them was to meet the man whom the Doctor's pen had in a day made famous. I was soon to have that gratification, and this is how it happened.

The magazine had been out but a few days, when I received a note from Mr. James T. Fields (then editor), that read briefly: "Turn in at the Old Corner tomorrow morning, if you are in town." Such requests from the office had a peculiar significance, and it was not my habit to neglect them. The next morning, accordingly, I might have been seen turning in duly at the Old Corner, then the famous Ticknor and Fields bookstore and publishing-house, to which the *Atlantic* had been transferred after the dissolution of the Winter Street firm of Phillips, Sampson and Co., also at that time the home of *Our Young Folks*, with which I was intimately connected.

I had already written at Mr. Fields's request "The Last Rally" for the previous November number of the *Atlantic*, and the prose article on the second election of Lincoln, "We are a Nation," for the December issue; so that I was not unprepared for the proposal that awaited me when I found him in his private room, which was, that I should write a "jubilee poem" on the fall of the Rebellion, for the June *Atlantic*, — at once, for, as he said, the first forms of that number were already on the press.

Always diffident of my capabilities, I replied that the time was too short.

"Not if you will undertake it," he said. "I'll hold back the last form for you, if necessary. Bring it in on Saturday, if you can, and then go to the Saturday Club dinner," — to occur, as I remember, in two or three days. He went on: "It will be unusually interesting, as we expect a full attendance — Emerson, Lowell, Holmes; and Battle-Laureate Brownell is to be there. He will be Holmes's guest, and you will be mine."

I suppose I tried to appear as if two

such propositions coming almost in a breath — that I should write the poem and meet the notables — were not particularly exhilarating; and perhaps I succeeded. At all events, I accepted the invitation for Saturday, and said I would think of the poem. I envy my own lost youth as I look back upon it (I was thirty-seven, but that seems very young to me now!) and recall the exaltation of spirits with which I went out of the Old Corner office, and walked all the way back to Prospect Hill (in Somerville, where my home then was), planning and already composing the poem expected of me. This must have been about the 26th or 27th of April, as the Club was to dine on the 29th.

I was to meet Fields in his office on Saturday afternoon and go with him to the dinner; of which anticipated festival I could not have been thinking very intently, during the horse-car trip from the suburbs, as I find in my note-book this memorandum of that memorable day: "Finished 'The Jaguar Hunt' on my way to town." "The Jaguar Hunt" was my "jubilee poem." At his desk I wrote into it, with the quill-pen he handed me, the alterations or additions I had thought of "on the way;" read it to him, at his insistence, then studied his countenance and intonations while he read it aloud in turn; all with much doubt on my part as to its being really as good as I had hoped it was, but thinking vastly better of it when at the finish he declared it was "just the thing!" He marked it for the printers, dropped it into the open mouth of a bag at his elbow, and said, "Now for the Parker House!"

There was as large an attendance at the Club meeting as he had expected, and some of the most noted of the notables were there when we arrived, — Lowell and his brother-in-law, Dr. Estes Howe; Emerson and Judge Hoar, from Concord; Rouse, the artist, and Dwight, the musical critic; Hedge and Whipple, and, foremost in vivacious activity, if least of all in stature, the Autocrat, with

a stranger a head taller than himself, whom he was introducing to the company.

The stranger was a plain, pleasant, quiet person, not at all embarrassed, yet seemingly a little dazed at finding himself the centre of such a group; as different as possible from the sort of Berserker bard one fancied must have written the battle poems; the youngest person present excepting myself (he was seven years my senior), and the most modest, with possibly the same exception. I thought Holmes characterized him very well, when, after introducing us, he said to me aside, in schoolgirlish phrase, but with an emphasis all his own, —

"He's just as nice as he can be!"

There were twenty or more at table, all on familiar terms with one another, the most distinguished with the more obscure, — not a head with a halo, any more than if the halos had been taken off and checked with the hats at the coat-room window. I have always found that the truly illustrious do not wear their glories consciously; and that when a man sees too certainly the circle of light around his own brow, all the more certainly it is n't there.

There were interesting things done and said, as there must be at such a gathering, but the incident with which this narrative is chiefly concerned occurred when Holmes got upon his feet and Lowell rapped on the board to call the attention of the talkers. After some complimentary allusion to his guest, — who sat beside him, with down-looking eyes, twirling an empty wine-glass, — Holmes drew from his pocket a manuscript, remarking that he was to have the happiness of reading to us a new poem by the writer who had shown himself an unrivaled master in that class of composition.

"It was written," he said, "within the past twenty-four hours, and the ink is hardly yet dry on it. It is a vivid and dramatic picture of the sinking of that black piratical craft, the Rebellion."

He paused to adjust his glasses and unfold the manuscript; while I thought, rather aghast, of my "Jaguar Hunt," and Fields whispered with a little smile in his big beard, "The same subject!"

"It is entitled 'Down!'" — and the Doctor proceeded to read. Every eye was turned upon him except the down-cast pair at his elbow. He never had a more attentive audience; and he threw all his force of expression into the short and rugged lines. The poem was cast in the same form of metre as the battle-pieces; it was a battle-piece itself, not the less lurid and flame-lit for being figurative. It was greeted with prolonged applause, every right hand clapping its fellow, except the hand that twirled the glass, — the hand that had written the poem. The enthusiasm which I shared with the rest has had four decades and more to cool, as the people's flush of victory over a fallen foe has cooled; but even now, as I recall the time, and the hour, and the Doctor's impassioned delivery, I am stirred again by lines like these: —

To the bottom of the Blue,
Ten thousand fathom deep,
With God's glad sun overhead, —
That is the way to weep,
So will we mourn our dead!

Hardly had the applause subsided when Emerson fixed his searching eyes upon me, and calling my name across the table, asked in his deliberate way, — "Can — you — match — that?"

Before I could answer, Fields spoke up confidently: "Yes, he can! He has given me a poem on the same subject; I wish I had it here, but I sent it to the printers an hour ago!"

He afterwards asked for Brownell's manuscript; it was transferred from Holmes's pocket to his own, and both poems appeared within a few pages of each other in the last signature of the *June Atlantic*.

The theme of both poems was in a general way the same, although my "Jaguar" typified more especially the Slave

Power, which had been favored and feared and petted until it had grown to be a savage monster, hunted down at last for dragging "the white lamb of Peace to his lair."

Then up rose the Farmer, he summoned his sons:

"Now saddle your horses, now look to your guns! . . .

Buckle tight, boys!" said he, "for who gallops with me,

Such a hunt as was never before, he shall see!"

It may be worth while to note here the curiously close resemblance between the theme and symbolism of Brownell's poem and of Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain!" written about that time, and published in the *Sequel to Drum Taps* a few months later. In "Down!" we have the sinking of the enemy's ship. In Whitman's poem —

From fearful trip the victor ship comes in
with object won.

Brownell has this brief allusion to the death of Lincoln: —

Our Captain's cold on the deck.

Whitman has the identical figure in but slightly varying phrase: —

On the deck my Captain lies
Fallen cold and dead;

and this is the thought he expands in his touching and tender monody. Yet there is no certainty that Whitman had ever seen Brownell's poem.

When the after-dinner cigars were in full blast, and the diners shoved back their chairs or changed positions at the table, Brownell and I drew together and became well acquainted in a half-hour's talk we had, standing near a window. He asked if I had published any other war poem than "The Last Rally;" and when I mentioned "The Color Bearer," remarked that he had a poem with the same title, which he would recite to me if I wished it. Of course I wished it, and there in the waning daylight of the window niche, he told me how he had got from a newspaper item the idea of his

poem, which he went on to repeat in quiet tones, hardly audible above the near-by conversation. I recognized in it his characteristic touches; when I said so, and went on to speak of the qualities I admired in some of his poems, he answered with a gentle smile, "There's nothing I can't do!" — showing what self-reliance may repose under the most unpretentious demeanor.

Returning to Hartford, he sent me in a day or two the inscribed copy of his *Lyrics* I have mentioned. I had correspondence with him at that time and later; but we never met again. A revised and much more presentable edition of his poems was brought out soon after by Ticknor and Fields, under the improved title, *War Lyrics and Other Poems*, and with an appreciative preface by Aldrich. It had some vogue, but nothing like what might have been expected of it, from its own extraordinary merits, and the press notices, which generally echoed Holmes's eloquent praises. It has been long out of print, and I know not where a copy of it can be obtained; all which goes to show that neither the acclamation of one man, nor the confirmation of many men, can give a writer renown, as Goethe

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is declared by Tolstoy to have made the fame of Shakespeare.

In 1867 Brownell sailed again with Farragut, this time on an expedition of good-will and pleasantness, accompanying the great admiral in his foreign voyages and peaceful conquest of an admiring world.

His death in 1872 called forth but little comment; but in the May *Atlantic* of the following year Aldrich printed a sonnet in his memory, —

They never crowned him, never knew his worth,
But let him go unlaureled to his grave.

The wreath so generously woven by Holmes for the brow of "Our Battle Laureate" had proved not fadeless and had been forgotten. He is now little read except in anthologies; Emerson, in *Parnassus*, gives two of his pieces, "The Old Cove" and "The Bay Fight;" and Stedman in his collection prints "The Burial of the Dane," "The Sphinx," and also portions of "The Bay Fight." Fortunately fame is not happiness, and is of little worth compared with those private solaces and satisfactions which it has often less power to give than to take away. Brownell did not overvalue it; he lived his own true life and was content.

RECOLLECTIONS OF AN ATLANTIC EDITORSHIP

BY W. D. HOWELLS

IN another place I have told how I came to be the assistant of Mr. Fields in the editorship of the *Atlantic Monthly*. That was in 1866, and in 1872 he gave up to me the control which he had held rather more in form than in fact from the time I joined him. He had left the reading of manuscripts to me, and almost always approved my choice in them, only reserving to himself the supreme right of accepting things I had not seen, and of inviting contributions. It was a suzerainty rather than a sovereignty which he exercised, and I might well have fancied myself independent under it. I never thought of questioning his easy over-lordship, and my assistant editorship ended with far more regret to me than my editorship, when in 1881 I resigned it to Mr. Aldrich.

I recall very distinctly the official parting with my kindly chief in his little room looking into the corner of the Common at 124 Tremont Street, for it was impressed upon me by something that had its pathos then, and has it now. In the emotion I felt at his willingness to give up his high place (it seemed to me one of the highest), I asked him why he wished to do it, with a wonder at which he smiled from his fifty-six years down upon my thirty-five. He answered, what I very well knew, that he was tired of it, and wanted time and a free mind to do some literary work of his own. "Besides," he added, with a cheerfulness that not only touched but dismayed me, "I think people generally have some foreknowledge of their going; I am past fifty, and I do not expect to live long." He did not cease smiling as he said this, and I cannot recall that in my amazement I answered with any of the usual protests we make against the expression of far less frank and open pre-

science. He lived much longer than he expected, after he had felt himself a stricken man; but still it was not many years before he died, when a relation marred by scarcely a moment of displeasure, and certainly without one unkindness from him, had altogether ceased.

The magazine was already established in its traditions when I came to it, and when I left it fifteen years later it seemed to me that if I had done any good it was little more than to fix it more firmly in them. During the nine years of its existence before my time it had the best that the greatest writers of New England could give it. First of these were, of course, Longfellow, Emerson, Hawthorne, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, Mrs. Stowe, and Bryant, and after them followed a long line of gifted people, whom but to number will recall many names of the second brilliancy, with some faded or fading beyond recall. I will not attempt a full list, but my memories of the *Atlantic* would be very faulty if they did not include the excellence in verse or prose of such favorites as Agassiz, Mrs. Paul Akers, Mr. Alden, Aldrich, Boker, Mr. Burroughs, Alice Cary, Caroline Chesebro', Lydia Maria Child, James Freeman Clarke, Conway, Rose Terry Cooke, Cranch, Curtis, J. W. De Forest, Mrs. Diaz, Rebecca Harding Davis, Mrs. Fields, J. T. Fields, Henry Giles, Annie Douglas Greene, Dr. E. E. Hale, Lucretia Hale, Gail Hamilton, Colonel Higginson, G. S. Hillard, J. G. Holland, Mrs. Howe, Henry James, father and son, Lucy Larcom, Fitz Hugh Ludlow, Donald G. Mitchell, Walter Mitchell, Fitz-James O'Brien, J. W. Palmer, Francis Parkman, T. W. Parsons, Norah Perry, Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Piatt, Buchanan Read, Epes Sargent, Mrs. Prescott Spof-

ford, W. J. Stillman, R. H. Stoddard, Elizabeth Stoddard, W. W. Story, Bayard Taylor, Celia Thaxter, Thoreau, Mr. J. T. Trowbridge, Mrs. Stuart Phelps Ward, David A. Wasson, E. P. Whipple, Richard Grant White, Adeline D. T. Whitney, Forceythe Wilson, Theodore Winthrop.

The tale is very long, but it might be lengthened a third without naming other names which could accuse me of having forgotten many delightful authors remembered by my older readers, and in some instances known to my younger readers. In the alphabetical course there is here no intimation of the writers' respective order or degree, and their quantity is as little suggested. Many of them were frequent contributors of very even excellence; others wrote one thing, or one or two or three things, that caught the public fancy with as potent appeal as the best of the many things that others did. Some of those who were conspicuous in 1866 lost their foremost place, and others then of no wider celebrity grew in fame that would rank them with those greatest ones whom I have mentioned first.

Beginning myself to contribute to the magazine in its third year, I held all its contributors in a devout regard and did not presume to distinguish between the larger and lesser luminaries, though I knew very well which I liked best. I was one of four singularly favored youths beyond the Alleghanies suffered more than once in the company of those gods and half-gods and quarter-gods of New England; the other two lonely Westerners I met in those gleaming halls of morn being my room-mate in Columbus, A. T. Fullerton, and another, my friend and fellow-poet Piatt in Louisville. Leonard Case dwelt in a lettered and moneyed seclusion (as we heard) at Cleveland, but Alice Cary had lived so long in the East that she was less an Ohioan than one of those few New Yorkers admitted with the overwhelming majority of New Englanders, whom I figured standing aloof from all us outsiders.

It was with a sort of incredulous gasping that I realized myself in authority with these when it came to that, and I should not now be able to say how or why it came to that, without allowing merits in myself which I should be the last to assert. These things are always much better attributed to Fortune, or at the furthest to Providence. What I know is that it was wonderful to me to go through the editorial record (which with my want of method I presently disused) and find my own name among the Accepted and the Rejected. It was far oftenest among the rejected; but there was a keener pleasure in those rejections, which could not now be repeated, than in the acceptances which stretched indefinitely before me.

Otherwise the record, where the disappointments so heavily outnumbered the fruitions, had its pathos; and at first I could not return a manuscript without a pang. But in a surprisingly little time that melting mood congealed into an icy indifference, if it did not pass into the sort of inhuman complacency of the judge who sentences a series of proven offenders. We are so made that we quickly turn the enemies of those who give us trouble; the hunter feels himself the foe of the game that leads him a long and difficult chase; and in like manner the editor wreaks a sort of revenge in rejecting the contributor who has bothered him to read a manuscript quite through before it yields itself unfit for publication. Perhaps I am painting the case in rather blacker colors than the fact would justify, though there is truth in what I say. Yet, for the most part, the affair did not come to this. It was at first surprising, and when no longer surprising it was gratifying, to find that the vast mass of the contributions fixed their own fate, almost at a glance. They were of subjects treated before, or subjects not to be treated at all, or they were self-condemned by their uncouth and slovenly style, or were written in a hand so crude and ignorant that it was at once apparent that they had not the root of literature

in them. The hardest of all to manage were those which had some savor of acceptance in them; which had promise, or which failed so near the point of success that it was a real grief to refuse them. Conscience then laid it upon me to write to the authors and give hopes, or reasons, or tender excuses, and not dismiss any of them with the printed circular that carried insult and despair in the smooth uncandor of its assurance that the contribution in question was not declined necessarily because of a want of merit in it.

The poor fellows, and still more the poor dears, were apt in the means by which they tried to find a royal road to the public through the magazine. Claims of acquaintance with friends of the editors, distressful domestic circumstances, adverse fortune, irresistible impulse to literature, mortal sickness in which the last hours of the writer would be brightened by seeing the poem or story in print, were the commonest of the appeals. These must have been much alike, or else I should remember more distinctive cases. One which I do remember was that of a woman in the West who sent the manuscript of a serial story with a letter, very simply and touchingly confiding that in her youth she had an ardent longing to be an author. She had married, instead, and now at fifty, with her large family of children grown up about her, prosperous and happy, she felt again the impulse of her girlhood. She enclosed a ten-dollar note to pay the editor for the trouble of reading her story, and she wished his true opinion of it. I should have been hard-hearted indeed if I had not answered this letter at length, with a carefully considered criticism which I sincerely grieved that I could not make favorable, and returned the sum of my hire with every good wish. I could not feel it a bribe, and I could not quite believe that it was with the design of corrupting me, that a very unliterary author came one day with two dollars to pay me for noticing his book. He said he

had been told that this was the way to get it noticed.

In those days, and for seven or eight years afterwards, I wrote nearly all the "Literary Notices" in the magazine. When I began to share the work with others, and at last to leave it almost wholly to them, they and I wrote so very much alike that I could not always be sure which notices I had done. That is a very common psychological event in journalism, when one prevalent will has fixed the tone, and I was willful, if not strong, in my direction after I came into full control. I never liked writing criticism, and never pleased myself in it; but I should probably have kept writing most of the *Atlantic* notices to the end, if my increasing occupation with fiction had not left me too few hours out of the twenty-four for them. The editorial salary I received covered the pay for my contributions, but I represented to the publishers that I could not write everything in the magazine, and they saw the reason of my delegating the notices. I had the help of the best young critics whom I knew, and who abounded in Boston and Cambridge; and after I succeeded Mr. Fields, I enlarged the editorial departments at the end of the magazine so as to include comment on politics, art, and music, as well as literature. For a while, I think for a year, I indulged the fancy of printing each month a piece of original music, with original songs; but though both the music and the songs were good, or at least from our best younger composers and poets, the feature did not please,—I do not know why,—and it was presently omitted.

To the reviews of American and English books I added certain pages of notices of French and German literature, and in these I had the very efficient and singularly instructed help of Mr. Thomas Sergeant Perry, who knew not only more of current continental literature than any other American, but more than all the other Americans. He wrote cleverly and facilely, and I felt that his work

had a unique value too little recognized by the public, and to which I should feel it a duty, if it were not so entirely a pleasure, to bear witness here. He was one of the many new contributors with whom I had the good fortune to work forward in the magazine. I could not exaggerate his rare qualifications for the work he undertook; his taste and his temperament, at once just and humane, were equal to his unrivaled knowledge. It is not too much to say that literally he read every important French and German book which appeared, not only in fiction, but in history, biography, criticism, and metaphysics, as well as those exact sciences which are nearest allied to the humanities.

I grouped the books according to their kinds, in the critical department, but eventually I broke from the departmental form altogether, and began to print the different groups and the longer reviews as separate articles. It was a way of adding to the apparent as well as real variety of the table of contents which has approved itself to succeeding editors.

In the course of time, but a very long time, the magazine felt the need of a more informal expression than it found in the stated articles, and the Contributors' Club took the place of all the different departments, those of politics, music, and art having been dropped before that of literature. The new idea was talked over with the late George Parsons Lathrop, who had become my assistant, and we found no way to realize it but by writing the first paragraphs ourselves, and so tempting others to write for the Club. In the course of a very few months we had more than help enough, and could easily drop out of the coöperation.

Except for the brief period of a year or eighteen months, I had no assistance during my editorship. During the greater part of the time I had clerkly help, most efficient, most intelligent; but I read all the manuscripts which claimed

critical attention; I wrote to contributors who merited more than a printed circular; I revised all the proofs, verifying every quotation and foreign word, and correcting slovenly style and syntax, and then I revised the author's and my own corrections. Meantime I was writing not only criticisms, but sketches, stories, and poems for the body of the magazine; and in the course of time, a novel each year. It seems like rather full work, but I had always leisure, and I made a long summer away from Cambridge in the country. The secret, if there was any secret, lay in my doing every day two or three hours' work, and letting no day pass idly. The work of reading manuscripts and writing letters could be pushed into a corner, and taken out for some interval of larger leisure; and this happened oftener and oftener as I grew more and more a novelist, and needed every morning for fiction. The proof-reading, which was seldom other than a pleasure, with its tasks of revision and research, I kept for the later afternoons and evenings; though sometimes it well-nigh took the character of original work, in that liberal *Atlantic* tradition of bettering the authors by editorial transposition and paraphrase, either in the form of suggestion or of absolute correction. This proof-reading was a school of verbal exactness and rhetorical simplicity and clearness, and in it I had succeeded others, my superiors, who were without their equals. It is still my belief that the best proof-reading in the world is done in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and it is probably none the worse for my having a part in it no longer.

As I have intimated, I found it by no means drudgery; though as for drudgery, I think that this is for the most part in the doer of it, and it is always a very wholesome thing, even when it is real, objective drudgery. It would be a much decenter, honest, and juster world if we each took his share of it, and I base my best hopes of the future in some

such eventuality. Not only the proofs were a pleasing and profitable drudgery, but the poor manuscripts, except in the most forbidding and hopeless instances, yielded their little crumbs of comfort; they supported while they fatigued. Very often they startled the drooping intelligence with something good and new amidst their impossibility; very often, when they treated of some serious matter, some strange theme, some unvisited country, some question of unimagined import, they instructed and delighted the judge who knew himself inexorably averse to their acceptance, for editorial reasons; they, condemned to darkness and oblivion, enlightened and edified him with some indelible thought, some fresh, or some freshly related, fact. My information is not of so great density yet but I can still distinguish points in its nebulous mass, from time to time, which I cannot follow to their luminous source in the chapter or verse of any book I have read. These, I suspect, derive from some far-forgotten source in the thousands of manuscripts which in my fifteen editorial years I read and rejected.

The rejection of a manuscript often left a pang, but the acceptable manuscript, especially from an unknown hand, brought a glow of joy which richly compensated me for all I suffered from the others. To feel the touch never felt before, to be the first to find the planet unimagined in the illimitable heaven of art, to be in at the dawn of a new talent, with the light that seems to mantle the written page: who would not be an editor, for such a privilege? I do not know how it is with other editors who are also authors, but I can truly say for myself that nothing of my own which I thought fresh and true ever gave me more pleasure than that I got from the like qualities in the work of some young writer revealing his power.

It was quite as often *her* power, for in our beloved republic of letters the citizenship is not reserved solely to males

of twenty-one and over. I have not counted up the writers who came forward in these pages during my time, and I do not know which sex prevails in their number, but if any one were to prove that there were more women than men, I should not be surprised. I do not remember any man who feigned himself a woman, but now and then a woman liked to masquerade as a man, though the disguise never deceived the editor, even when it deceived the reader, except in the very signal and very noted instance of Miss Mary N. Murfree, whom, till I met her face to face, I never suspected for any but Charles Egbert Craddock. The severely simple, the robust, the athletic, hand which she wrote would have sufficed to carry conviction of her manhood against any doubt. But I had no doubts. I believe I took the first story she sent, and for three or four years I addressed my letters of acceptance, or criticism, to Charles Egbert Craddock, Murfreesboro', Tennessee, without the slightest misgiving. Then she came to Boston, and Aldrich, who had succeeded me, and who had already suffered the disillusion awaiting me, asked me to meet Craddock at dinner. He had asked Dr. Holmes and Lawrence Barrett, too; and I should not attempt to say whose astonishment he enjoyed most. But I wish I could recall word for word the exquisite terms in which Dr. Holmes turned his discomfiture into triumph in that most delicately feminine presence.

The proof of identity, if any were needed, came with the rich, full pipe of a voice in which she answered our words and gasps of amaze. In literary history I fancy there has been no such perfect masquerade; but masquerade was the least part of Miss Murfree's success. There seems in the dust and smoke of the recent literary explosions an eclipse of that fine talent, as strong as it is fine, and as native as it is rare; but I hope that when the vaporous reputations blow away, her clear light will show the stronger for its momentary obscurity. She was the

first to express a true Southern quality in fiction, and it was not the less Southern because it rendered the strange, rude, wild life of a small section of the greater section which still unhappily remains a section. One might have said, looking back from the acknowledged fact of her personality, that a woman of the Rosa Bonheur type could well have caught the look of that half-savagery in her men; but that only a man could have touched in the wilding, flower-like, pathetic loveliness of the sort of heroine she gave to art.

She was far from the first, and by no means the last of those women, not less dear than great, whose work carried forward the early traditions of studied beauty in the magazine with something newer and racier in the flavor and fragrance of their fiction. I must name at the head of these that immediate classic Miss Sarah Orne Jewett, whose incomparable sketches of New England character began to appear well within my assistant-editorship, with whatever credit to me I may not rob my chief of. The truth is, probably, that he liked them as well as I, and it was merely my good luck to be the means of encouraging them in the free movement, unfettered by the limits of plot, and keeping only to the reality, which no other eye than hers has seen so subtly, so humorously, so touchingly. It is the foible of editors, if it is not rather their forte, to flatter themselves that though they may not have invented their contributions, they have at least invented their contributors; and if any long-memoried reader chooses to hail me an inspired genius because of my instant and constant appreciation of Miss Jewett's writing, I shall be the last to snub him down.

Without greatly fearing my frown, he may attribute a like merit to me for having so promptly and unremittingly recognized the unique artistry and beauty of Mr. Henry James's work. My desert in valuing him is so great that I can freely confess the fact that two

of his stories and one of his criticisms appeared in the magazine some years before my time, though perhaps not with the band of music with which I welcomed every one afterwards. I do not know whether it was to try me on the story, or the story on me, that my dear chief (who was capable of either subtlety) gave me the fourth of Mr. James's contributions to read in the manuscript; but I was equal to either test, and returned it with the jubilant verdict, "Yes, and as many more as you can get from the author." He was then writing also for other magazines; after that I did my best to keep him for the *Atlantic*, and there was but one of his many and many contributions about which we differed. This was promptly printed elsewhere; but though I remember it very well, I will not name it, for we might differ about it still, and I would not make the reader privy to a quarrel where all should be peace.

I feel a danger to the general peace in mentioning certain favorite contributors without mentioning others who have an equal right; but if it is understood that some are mentioned with a bad conscience for those passed in silence (I was not asked to write this whole number of the magazine) I hope I shall be forgiven. There was now and then a single contribution, or two contributions, which gave me high hopes of the author, but which were followed by no others, or no others so acceptable. Among such was "Captain Ben's Choice," a sketch of New England shore-character by Mrs. Frances L. Pratt, done with an authentic touch, and as finely and firmly as something of Miss Jewett's or Mrs. Wilkins Freeman's. There were two stories, the only ones sent me, by Mrs. Sarah Butler Wister, which had a distinction in the handling, and a penetrating quality in the imagining, far beyond that of most of the stories I was editorially proud of. Other contributors who began in *Atlantic* air were acclimated in another. In one volume I printed four

poems, which I thought and still think admirable, by Miss Edith Jones, who needs only to be named as Mrs. Edith Wharton to testify to that prophetic instinct in me which every editor likes to think himself endowed with; it does not matter if the prophecy fulfills itself a little circuitously.

My liking for Dr. Weir Mitchell and his work was a taste likewise inherited from my chief, though, strictly speaking, we began contributor and assistant editor together. From the first there was something equally attractive to me in his mystic, his realistic, and his scientific things, perhaps because they were all alike scientific. "The Case of George Dedlock" and "Was He Dead" gave me a scarcely different delight from that I took in "The Autobiography of a Quack." I have since followed the writer far in other fields, especially where he made his poetic ventures, but I keep a steadfast preference for those earlier things of his; I do not pretend it is a reasoned preference.

In another place (there are now so many other places!) I have told of my pleasure in the acquaintance, which instantly became friendship, with Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen and his poetry; whether he wrote it in verse or prose, it was always poetry. I need not dwell here upon that pleasure which his too early death has tinged with a lasting grief; but surely the reader who shared the first joy of his "Gunnar" with me, would not like me to leave it unnamed among these memories. That romance was from the rapture of his own Norse youth and the youth of the Norse literature then so richly and fully adolescent in Björnson, and Lie, and Kielland, and hardening to its sombre senescence in Ibsen. Boyesen never surpassed "Gunnar" in the idyllic charm which in him was never at odds with reality; but he went forward from it, irregularly enough, as a novelist and critic and poet, till he arrived at his farthest reach in "The Mammon of Unrighteousness," a great picture of the American life which he painted with

a mastery few born to it have equaled, and fewer yet surpassed.

There was long a superstition, which each of the editors before me had tried to enlighten, that the *Atlantic* was unfriendly to all literature outside of Boston or New England, or at the farthest, New York or Philadelphia. The fact was that there was elsewhere little writing worth printing in it; but that little it had cordially welcomed. When the little became a good deal the welcome was not more cordial, for it could not have been; and in seeking a further expansion, I was only following the tradition of the magazine. I cannot claim that there was anything original in my passion for the common, for "the familiar and the low," which Emerson held the strange and high. Lowell had the same passion for it in the intervals of his "toryism of the nerves," and nobody could have tasted its raciness with a keener gusto than my chief. But perhaps it was my sense not only of the quaint, the comic, but of the ever-poetic in the common, that made it dear to me. It was with a tingling delight that I hailed any verification of my faith in it, and among the confirmations which I received there was none stronger than that in the "Adirondack Sketches" of Mr. Philip Deming. They were, whether instinctively or consciously, in the right manner, and of a simplicity in motive, material, and imagination as fine as something Norse, or Slavic, or Italian, or Spanish. No doubt, "Lida Ann," "Lost," "John's Trial," and "Willie" are distinguishable among the multitude of ghosts that haunt the memory of elder readers, but would only come to trouble joy in the younger sort, who delight in the human-nature fakirs of our latter-day fiction. Surely, in some brighter and clearer future, such dear, and true, and rare creatures of the sympathetic mind must have their welcome palingenesis for all.

Mr. Deming was only of the West which is as near Boston as Albany, but as I have said, there were four trans-

Alleghanian poets, who had penetrated to the mournful and misty *Atlantic* (as they had feared it) from their native lakes and rivers. Even in the sixth year of the magazine, Bret Harte of California had appeared in it; and others of the San Francisco school, notably Charles Warren Stoddard, had won an easy entrance after him. Where, indeed, would Mr. Stoddard have been denied, if he had come with something so utterly fresh and delicious as "A Prodigal in Tahiti"? Branches he bore of that and many another enchanted stem, which won his literature my love, and keep it to this day, so that a tender indignation rises in my heart when I find it is not known to every one. John Hay, so great in such different kinds, came also with verse and fiction, studies of the West, and studies of the lingering East in Spain as he had found it in his "Castilian Days." Later came Mark Twain, originally of Missouri, but then provisionally of Hartford, and now ultimately of the Solar System, not to say the Universe. He came first with "A True Story," one of those noble pieces of humanity with which the South has atoned chiefly if not solely through him for all its despoilment to the negro. Then he came with other things, but preëminently with "Old Times on the Mississippi," which I hope I am not too fondly mistaken in thinking I suggested his writing for the magazine. "A True Story" was but three pages long, and I remember the anxiety with which the business side of the magazine tried to compute its pecuniary value. It was finally decided to give the author twenty dollars a page, a rate unexampled in our modest history. I believe Mr. Clemens has since been offered a thousand dollars a thousand words, but I have never regretted that we paid him so handsomely for his first contribution. I myself felt that we were throwing in the highest recognition of his writing as literature, along with a sum we could ill afford; but the late Mr. Houghton, who

had then become owner and paymaster, had no such reflection to please him in the headlong outlay. He had always believed that Mark Twain was literature, and it was his zeal and courage which justified me in asking for more and more contributions from him, though at a lower rate. We counted largely on his popularity to increase our circulation when we began to print the piloting papers; but with one leading journal in New York republishing them as quickly as they appeared, and another in St. Louis supplying the demand of the Mississippi Valley, and another off in San Francisco offering them to his old public on the Pacific slope, the sales of the *Atlantic Monthly* were not advanced a single copy, so far as we could make out. Those were the simple days when the magazines did not guard their copyright as they do now; advance copies were sent to the great newspapers, which helped their readers to the plums, poetic and prosaic, before the magazine could reach the news-stands, and so relieved them of the necessity of buying it.

Among other contributors to whom we looked for prosperity and by whom we were disappointed of it, was Charles Reade, whose star has now declined so far that it is hard to believe that at the time we printed his "Griffith Gaunt" it outshone or presently outflashed any other light of English fiction. We had also a short serial story from Charles Dickens, eked out into three numbers, for which we paid (I remember gasping at the monstrous sum) a thousand dollars; and one poem by Tennyson, and several by Browning, without sensible pecuniary advantage. But this was in the earlier rather than the later part of my term, that the transatlantic muse was more invited; I thought either she did not give us of her best, or that she had not anything so acceptable to give us as our own muse.

The fact is we were growing, whether we liked it or not, more and more American. Without ceasing to be New

England, without ceasing to be Bostonian, at heart, we had become southern, mid-western, and far-western in our sympathies. It seemed to me that the new good things were coming from those regions rather than from our own coasts and hills, but it may have been that the things were newer oftener than better. A careful count of heads might still show that a majority of the good heads in the magazine were New England heads. In my time, when I began to have it quite to myself, our greatest writers continued to contribute, with the seconding which was scarcely to be distinguished in quality. As if from the grave, Hawthorne rose in the first number I made up, with "Septimius Felton" in his wizard hand, amidst a company of his living contemporaries who are mostly now his fellow-ghosts. Dr. Holmes printed "The Poet at the Breakfast-Table" in my earliest volumes, and thereafter with touching fealty to the magazine responded to every appeal of the young editor. Longfellow was constant, as before; Lowell was even hurt when once, to spare him the tiresome repetition, I had not put his name in the prospectus; Emerson sent some of his most Emersonian poems; Whittier was forgivingly true to the flag, after its mistaken bearer had once refused his following. Among the younger poets (I will call none of them minor) Aldrich was as constant as Holmes, and Stedman as responsive as Longfellow; Bayard Taylor was generous of his best, as he had always been. Mrs. Stuart Phelps, Mrs. Thaxter, Mrs. Prescott Spofford, Mrs. L. C. Moulton, Mrs. Fields, Lucy Larcom, Mr. Trowbridge, wrote characteristic verse which I cannot believe any one more valued than the new host who welcomed it.

If he welcomed from Indiana the note of Maurice Thompson with a glad sense of its freshness, he accepted every one of the twelve pieces offered him by Hiram Rich of Gloucester, Massachusetts, with as deep a pleasure in their new touch; and he printed as eagerly the richly fancied,

richly pictorial poems of that sadly undervalued true poet, Edgar Fawcett. Helen Hunt Jackson of Massachusetts and Paul H. Hayne of South Carolina had always the same hospitality if not always the same esteem. They were poets both, though one is scarcely more remembered than the other. Constance Fenimore Woolson of Cleveland sent stories and studies of life in the Great Lake lands; and Mr. William Henry Bishop of Milwaukee contributed a romance which those who have not forgotten "Detmold" must remember for the restraint and delicacy with which a new motive in fiction was managed, and the truth with which the daring situation was imagined. George Parsons Lathrop, Hawaiian-born and German-bred, came to my help in the editorship about the time that the most American of Scotchmen, Robert Dale Owen, was writing his charming autobiography in separable chapters, after the fashion adopted by that most American of Englishmen, James Parton, in printing his biography of Jefferson. John Fiske, one of the most autochthonic of New Englanders, pursued at my suggestion the same method with the papers forming his "Myths and Myth-Makers," and began with them his long line of popular contributions to the magazine, though some minor articles had preceded them. Another New Englander, quite as autochthonic, began contributor with a series of brilliant sketches, and ended with a series of papers on "Sanitary Drainage" which were equally characteristic of his various talent. This was George E. Waring, who had been the soldier he always looked, and who had afterwards the boldness to dream of cleaning New York, and when he had realized his dream, went to Cuba and died a hero of humanity in the cause of sanitary science. Yet another New Englander of almost equal date, as absolutely New England in his difference from the others as either, was that gentle and fine and quaint Charles Dudley Warner; his studies of travel shed a light on these pages as from

a clear lamp of knowledge, which every now and then emitted a flash of the tricky gayety, the will-o'-the-wisp humor, pervading his playful essays.

It is in vain that I try to separate my editorial achievements from those of my immediate predecessor. I had certainly the indisputable credit of suggesting, if not instigating, the publication of Mrs. Frances Kemble's autobiography by asking why she did not write it, when I already knew she was writing it, and so perhaps taking her fancy. But shall I claim the honor of being Aldrich's editor, because I published all his romances and many of his best poems? Many others yet of his best had appeared in the *Atlantic* during my own literary nonage, when I classed him with Longfellow and Lowell in his precocious majority; and the reader may be sure there were none of his pieces in that half-barrel of accepted manuscripts which came down to me from the first as well as the second editor of the magazine.

I say half-barrel, but if that seems too much I will compromise on a bushel, on condition that it shall be full measure, pressed down and running over. From the beginning up to my time and all through it, the custom of the magazine had been to pay for contributions on publication, and such inhibition as fear of the publisher's check had not been laid upon Lowell's literary tenderness or Fields's generous hopefulness when it came to the question of keeping some passable sketch, or article, or story, or poem. These were now there, in all their sad variety, in that half-barrel, or call it bushel, which loomed a hogshead in my view, when my chief left it to me. But I was young and strong, and comparatively bold, and I grappled with these manuscripts at once. I will not pretend that I read them; for me the fact that they were accepted was enough, if they still had any life in them. The test was very simple. If the author was still living, then his contribution was alive; if he was dead, then it was dead

too; and I will never confess with what ghoulish glee I exulted in finding a manuscript exanimate. With the living I struggled through a long half-score of years, printing them as I could, and if any author dropped by the way, laying his unpublished manuscript like a laurel crown upon his tomb. When Aldrich came to my relief, I placed a pathetic remnant of the bushel, say a half-peck, in his hands, and it was with a shock that I learned later of his acting upon a wholly different conception of his duty to these heirlooms; he sent them all back, dead or alive, and so made an end of an intolerable burden.

I do not blame him for this short and easy method with them; I am not sure but it would be well for mankind if we could use some such method with all the heirlooms of the past. But now that I am no longer an editor, and am without the reasonable hope of ever being one again, I am going to free my mind with regard to the sin I once shared. I think an editor has no right to accept a contribution unless he has some clear expectation of printing it within a reasonable time. His obligation toward the author is not discharged when he pays him; he is still bound to him in the debt of that publicity which the author was seeking from him and to which he has a right, as forming by far, especially if he is young and unknown, the greater part of his reward. In my time I was guilty of wrong in this sort to so many authors that if there is really going to be a Last Day I shall not know where to hide myself from them. In vain shall I plead a misplaced tenderness for their feelings; in vain a love for their work. I ought to have shielded them from both, and given them their contributions back with tears of praise, and hopes for them with other editors able to publish them soon, mingling with my fond regrets. Instead of that, I often kept them waiting a year, two years, three, five, when I had already kept them waiting months for a reading. The image of my desk is before me as

I write, with unread manuscripts cumbering a corner of it, and I busy with my fictioning, and pretending that I was only seeking to get the mood and the moment together for reading them. These were selected manuscripts which I had dug out of darkling drawers where I had thrown them indiscriminately, good, bad, and indifferent, as they came, and now and then visited them, to satisfy my bad conscience, and pluck forth a possibility or two, and add it to the heap at the corner of my desk. There, if I had been as honest with myself as I am now trying to be with the reader, I should not have let them lie so long, how long! before I got the mood and moment together for them. That was a favorite phrase of mine, in those days; I remember using it with many contributors whom I cannot remember.

They are a patient tribe, these poor contributors, and they seldom turned upon me. Now and then they did, though, and wreaked a just resentment. This I took meekly when I had some excuse; when I had none, I returned it with a high professional scorn, tacit or explicit, which I am afraid editors still practice toward injured contributors; for if I, a very good man, as editors go, could carry myself so to their indignation, what must be the behavior of the average wicked editor of this degenerate day? I hate still to think of their vengeance, but how much more of their pardon, patient, silent, saintly?

But it was not to indulge these fond pleasures of autobiography that I began by speaking of the essential unity of the editorial tradition. Fields had continued Lowell, and perforce I infrangibly continued Fields, coloring the web a little, it seems a very little, from my own tastes and opinions. Certain writers besides those I have already named wrote on from him to me. Prime among these was Harriet Beecher Stowe, and next her was our honored and revered Dr. Hale, whose charmingly ingenious work came to me first in "My Visit to Sybaris," and last

in "Life in the Brick Moon:" work not only charming and ingenious, but of a penetration, a presage, not yet fully realized through the play of humor and fancy. His peer and contemporary, Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who had written so much, and always in the interest of art and humanity, honored my page as he had that of my predecessors; but I came to my place too late to welcome a contemporary of both, the friend whom I cannot trust myself to praise except in naming him, Charles Eliot Norton. His scholarship, his taste, his skill were already dedicated to other tasks; he was, with Lowell, editor of the *North American Review*; and I never edited anything of his except one brief critical notice, though the tale of his earlier contributions to the magazine continued from the first number, in criticisms and essays, to the last number of Mr. Lowell's time. I was proud to edit the brilliant chapters which Francis Parkman continued to give the magazine from the forthcoming volumes of history, ranking him at the head of American historians, and with the great historians of our time. The natural-historian, Mr. John Burroughs, who lives to instruct our day in the modest and beautiful truth of the life so near and yet so far from ours, was a guest of Fields's long before he was mine; and Clarence King, worthy to be named with him for the charm of his science, came distinctly within the time of my suzerain. I read his proofs, though, and acclaimed the literature which King was always humorously ready to disclaim. Among the first serials which I printed was that story of Caroline Chesebro's, "The Foe in the Household," which I still think of a singular excellence. Later, quite within my time, were a novel and several short stories by William M. Baker, so racy of the South, and so good of their kind, that I remember them yet with satisfaction. Of the South, racy and excellent too, were the "Rebel's Recollections" of

Mr. George Cary Eggleston, which it is pleasant to think that I asked him to set down for the magazine. I have often testified my esteem for the novels of J. W. De Forest, which I was so willing to print, and I need not repeat the witness here. But I should wrong myself if I did not record my strong belief that I was among the first editors to recognize the admirable talent of Octave Thanet.

I should like to speak of them all, those contemporaries and contributors of mine, whom naming a few of brings me my old joy in, with a grief for leaving any unnamed. Their successes could not have been dearer to them than they were to me. As each new talent revealed itself to me I exulted in it with a transport which I was sure the public would share with me, and which, whether it fell out so or not, it was an unselfish and unalloyed delight to edit, such as few things in life can give. It was all very, very intimate, that relation of editor and contributor. I do not mean as to personal acquaintance, for in the vast, the overwhelming majority of cases, it never came to that; but I mean the sort of metempsychosis by which I was put so entirely in their place, became so more than one with them, that any slight or wrong done them hurt me more than if it were done to me. Each number of the magazine was an ever new and ever dear surprise for me, at every advance of its being, from the time I put it together in manuscript and gave the copy to the printers until it came into my hands a finished product from the bindery, smelling so intoxicatingly of the ink and paper. At the end of the editor's month, which was a full month before the reader's, there was a struggle with the physical limitations of the magazine which tasked all my powers. I went to have it out, first to the University Press, and then to the Riverside Press; and there I cut and hewed and pared at the quivering members of the closing pages till they came into bounds and the new number was ready to orb about

in the space that was perhaps finally too large for it. For the publishers, the corrections, especially the excisions, were expensive pangs, like those of all surgery; but often I wished to avoid them by the yet more expensive enlargement of the magazine, entreating the publishers for eight pages more, or even for four, though I knew they must lose money by it.

There go with these more material memories fitting remembrances, psychological to ineffability, of winter days, and laborious trudges to the printers' through the deep Cambridge snow, when the overwrought horse-car faltered in its track; and of Cambridge summer nights spent far toward their starry noons over obdurate proofs, while the crickets and the grasshoppers rasped together under the open window, and the mad moth beat against the chimney of the lamp. What sounds long silent, what scents fallen odorless, renew themselves in the content of these records! They are parts of the universal death, which, unless we call it the universal life, we are forever dying into. They who equally with myself composed the *Atlantic*, the beloved, the admired contributors, outdied me, so many of them, years and years ago. The great Agassiz, who wept to think he should not finish his book, stayed to give the magazine only a few first chapters. It was but the other year that the wise, the good Shaler, whose writing in it began almost with mine, ceased from it; and now Aldrich, my time-mate, my work-mate, my play-mate, is gone, he who should have died hereafter, how long hereafter! For the greater great, they who were still living presences when the enterprise which their genius had stamped with ineffaceable beauty and dignity was safe in its strong maturity, the tears were dried years ago. If one outlives, one loses, one sorrows and ceases to sorrow. That is the law. I cannot wish that these intimates in the ideal and the real had outlived the least of their friends, but I wish they had not died till the work which they, far more than any editor, or

all the editors, created, was crowned with the end of its half-hundredth year.

I did not well know how to begin these wandering lucubrations — I believe I never used the word before, but it is not too late — and I do not know better how to end them. But the reader may care to learn how it was with one when he parted with the task which had so intensely occupied him for fifteen years. When the burden dropped from me, it was instantly as if I had never felt it. I did not think of it enough to miss it,

to rejoice that it was gone. After another fifteen years I began to dream of resuming it. I would dream that I was on the train from New York to Boston, going back to be editor of the *Atlantic* again. The dream went on, fitfully or frequently, for five or six years. Then at last I found myself on the train with one of my successors, not the least of my friends, and I said, "Well, Scudder, I have often dreamed of going back to be editor of the *Atlantic*, and here, now, I am really going." But that was a dream, too.

LITERATURE

(1857-1907)

BY THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON

I

THE brilliant French author, Stendhal, used to describe his ideal of life as dwelling in a Paris garret and writing endless plays and novels. This might seem to any Anglo-American a fantastic wish; and no doubt the early colonists on this side of the Atlantic Ocean, after fighting through the Revolution by the aid of Rochambeau and his Frenchmen, might have felt quite out of place had they followed their triumphant allies back to Europe, in 1781, and inspected their way of living. We can hardly wonder, on the other hand, that the accomplished French traveler, Philarète Chasles, on visiting this country in 1851, looked through the land in despair at not finding a humorist, although the very boy of sixteen who stood near him at the rudder of a Mississippi steamboat may have been he who was destined to amuse the civilized world under the name of Mark Twain.¹

¹ "Toute l'Amérique ne possède pas un humoriste." *Etudes sur la Littérature et les Mœurs des Anglo-Américains*. Paris, 1851.

That which was, however, to astonish most seriously all European observers who were watching the dawn of the young American republic, was its presuming to develop itself in its own original way, and not conventionally. It was destined, as Cicero said of ancient Rome, to produce its statesmen and orators first, and its poets later. Literature was not inclined to show itself with much promptness, during and after long years of conflict, first with the Indians, then with the mother country. There were individual instances of good writing: Judge Sewall's private diaries, sometimes simple and noble, sometimes unconsciously eloquent, often infinitely amusing; William Byrd's and Sarah Knight's piquant glimpses of early Virginia travel; Cotton Mather's quaint and sometimes eloquent passages; Freneau's poetry, from which Scott and Campbell borrowed phrases. Behind all, there was the stately figure of Jonathan Edwards standing gravely in the background, like a monk at the cloister door, with his treatise on the *Freedom of the Will*.

Thus much for the scanty literary product; but when we turn to look for a new-born statesmanship in a nation equally new-born, the fact suddenly strikes us that the intellectual strength of the colonists lay there. The same discovery astonished England through the pamphlet works of Jay, Lee, and Dickinson; destined to be soon followed up with a long series of equally strong productions, to which Lord Chatham paid that fine tribute in his speech before the House of Lords on January 20, 1775. "I must declare and avow," he said, "that in all my reading and observation — and it has been my favorite study — I have read Thucydides and have studied and admired the master-states of the world — for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation, or body of men, can stand in preference to the general Congress of Philadelphia." Yet it is to be noticed further that here, as in other instances, the literary foresight in British criticism had already gone in advance of even the statesman's judgment, for Horace Walpole, the most brilliant of the literary men of his time, had predicted to his friend Mason, two years before the Declaration of Independence, that there would one day be a Thucydides in Boston and a Xenophon in New York.

It is interesting to know that such predictions were by degrees shadowed forth even among children in America, as they certainly were among those of us who, living in Cambridge as boys, were permitted the privilege of looking over whole boxes of Washington's yet unprinted letters in the hands of our kind neighbor Jared Sparks (1834-37); manuscripts whose curved and varied signatures we had the inexhaustible boyish pleasure of studying and comparing; as we had also that of enjoying the pithy wisdom of Franklin in his own handwriting a few years later (1840), in the hands of the same kind and neighborly editor. But it was not always recognized by those who

grew up in the new-born nation that in the mother country itself a period of literary ebb tide was then prevailing. When Fisher Ames, being laid on the shelf as a Federalist statesman, wrote the first really important essay on American Literature, — an essay published in 1809, after his death, — he frankly treated literature itself as merely one of the ornaments of despotism. He wrote of it, "The time seems to be near, and, perhaps, is already arrived, when poetry, at least poetry of transcendent merit, will be considered among the lost arts. It is a long time since England has produced a first-rate poet. If America had not to boast at all what our parent country boasts no longer, it will not be thought a proof of the deficiency of our genius." Believing as he did, that human freedom could never last long in a democracy, Ames thought that perhaps, when liberty had given place to an emperor, this monarch might desire to see splendor in his court, and to occupy his subjects with the cultivation of the arts and sciences. At any rate, he maintained, "After some ages we shall have many poor and a few rich, many grossly ignorant, a considerable number learned, and a few eminently learned. Nature, never prodigal of her gifts, will produce some men of genius, who will be admired and imitated." The first part of this prophecy failed, but the latter part fulfilled itself in a manner quite unexpected.

II

The point unconsciously ignored by Fisher Ames, and by the whole Federalist party of his day, was that there was already being created on this side of the ocean, not merely a new nation, but a new temperament. How far this temperament was to arise from a change of climate, and how far from a new political organization, no one could then foresee, nor is its origin yet fully analyzed; but the fact itself is now coming to be more and more recognized. It may be that

Nature said, at about that time, "Thus far the English is my best race; but we have had Englishmen enough; now for another turning of the globe, and a further novelty. We need something with a little more buoyancy than the Englishman: let us lighten the structure, even at some peril in the process. Put in one drop more of nervous fluid and make the American.' With that drop, a new range of promise opened on the human race, and a lighter, finer, more highly organized type of mankind was born." This remark, which appeared first in the *Atlantic Monthly*, called down the wrath of Matthew Arnold, who missed the point entirely in calling it "tall talk" or a species of brag, overlooking the fact that it was written as a physiological caution addressed to this nervous race against overworking its children in school. In reality, it was a point of the greatest importance. If Americans are to be merely duplicate Englishmen, Nature might have said, the experiment is not so very interesting, but if they are to represent a new human type, the sooner we know it, the better. No one finally did more toward recognizing this new type than did Matthew Arnold himself, when he afterwards wrote, in 1887, "Our countrymen [namely, the English] with a thousand good qualities, are really, perhaps, a good deal wanting in lucidity and flexibility;" and again in the same essay, "The whole American nation may be called 'intelligent,' that is to say, 'quick.'"¹ This would seem to yield the whole point between himself and the American writer whom he had criticised.

One of the best indications of this very difference, even to this day, is the way in which American journalists and magazínists are received in England, and their English compeers among ourselves. An American author connected with the *St. Nicholas Magazine* was told by a London publisher, within my recollection, that the plan of the periodical was essentially wrong. "The pages of riddles

at the end, for instance," he said, "no child would ever guess them;" and although the American assured him that they were guessed regularly every month in twenty thousand families or more, the publisher still shook his head. As to the element of humor itself, it used to be the claim of a brilliant New York talker that he had dined through three English counties on the strength of the jokes which he had found in the corners of an old American *Farmer's Almanac* which he had happened to put into his trunk when packing for his European trip.

From Brissot and Volney, Chastellux and Crèvecoeur, down to Ampère and De Tocqueville, there was an appreciation, denied to the English, of this lighter quality, and this certainly seems to indicate that the change in the Anglo-American temperament had already begun to show itself. Ampère especially notices what he calls "une veine européenne" among the educated classes. Many years after, when Mrs. Frances Anne Kemble, writing in reference to the dramatic stage, pointed out that the theatrical instinct of Americans created in them an affinity for the French which the English, hating exhibitions of emotion and self-display, did not share, she recognized in our nation this tinge of the French temperament, while perhaps giving to it an inadequate explanation.

III

The prominence justly given, first to Philadelphia by Franklin and Brockden Brown, and then to New York by Cooper and Irving, was in each case too detached and fragmentary to create more than these individual fames, however marked or lasting these may be. It required time and a concentrated influence to constitute a literary group in America. Bryant and Channing, with all their marked powers, served only as a transition to it, yet the group was surely coming, and its creation has perhaps never been put in so compact a summary as that made by that

¹ *Nineteenth Century*, vol. xxii, pp. 324, 319.

clear-minded ex-editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, the late Horace Scudder. He said, "It is too early to make a full survey of the immense importance to American letters of the work done by half a dozen great men in the middle of this century. The body of prose and verse created by them is constituting the solid foundation upon which other structures are to rise; the humanity which it holds is entering into the life of the country, and no material invention, or scientific discovery, or institutional prosperity, or accumulation of wealth will so powerfully affect the spiritual well-being of the nation for generations to come."

The geographical headquarters of this particular group was Boston, of which Cambridge and Concord may be regarded for this purpose as suburbs. Such a circle of authors as Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier, Alcott, Thoreau, Parkman, and others had never before met in America; and now that they have passed away, no such local group anywhere remains; nor has the most marked individual genius elsewhere — such, for instance, as that of Poe or Whitman — been the centre of so conspicuous a combination. The best literary representative of this group of men in bulk was undoubtedly the *Atlantic Monthly*, to which almost every one of them contributed, and of which they made up the substantial opening strength.

With these there was, undoubtedly, a secondary force developed at that period in a remarkable lecture system, which spread itself rapidly over the country and in which most of the above authors took some part and several took leading parts, these lectures having much formative power over the intellect of the nation. Conspicuous among the lecturers also were such men as Gough, Beecher, Chapin, Whipple, Holland, Curtis, and lesser men who are now collectively beginning to fade into oblivion. With these may be added the kindred force of Abolitionists, headed by Wendell Phillips and Freder-

ick Douglass, whose remarkable powers drew to their audiences many who did not agree with them. Women like Lucretia Mott, Anna Dickinson, and Lucy Stone joined the force. These lectures were inseparably linked with literature as a kindred source of popular education; they were subject, however, to the limitation of being rather suggestive than instructive, because they always came in a detached way and so did not favor coherent thinking. The much larger influence now exerted by courses of lectures in the leading cities does more to strengthen the habit of consecutive thought than did the earlier system, and such courses, joined with the great improvement in public schools, are assisting vastly in the progress of public education. The leader who most distinguished himself in this last direction was, doubtless, Horace Mann, who died in 1859. The influence of American colleges, while steadily maturing into universities all over the country, has made itself felt more and more obviously, especially as these colleges have with startling suddenness and comprehensiveness extended their privileges to women also, whether in the form of coeducation or of institutions for women only.

For many years, the higher intellectual training of Americans was obtained almost entirely through periods of study in Europe, especially in Germany. Men, of whom Everett, Ticknor, Cogswell, and Bancroft were the pioneers, beginning in 1818 or thereabouts, discovered that Germany and not England must be made our national model in this higher education; and this discovery was strengthened by the number of German refugees, often highly trained men, who sought this country for political safety. The influence of German literature on the American mind was undoubtedly at its highest point half a century ago, and the passing away of the great group of German authors then visible was even more striking than have been the corresponding changes in England and

America; but the leadership of Germany in purely scientific thought and invention has kept on increasing, so that the mental tie between that nation and our own was perhaps never stronger than now.

In respect to literature, the increased tendency to fiction, everywhere visible, has nowhere been more marked than in America. Since the days of Cooper and Mrs. Stowe, the recognized leader in this department has been Mr. Howells; that is, if we base leadership on higher standards than that of merely numerical comparison. The actual sale of copies in this department of literature has been greater in certain cases than the world has before seen; but it has rarely occurred that books thus copiously multiplied have taken very high rank under more deliberate criticism. In some cases, as in that of Bret Harte, an author has won fame in early life by the creation of a few striking characters, and has then gone on reproducing them without visible progress; and this result has been most apt to occur wherever British praise has come in strongly, that being often more easily won by a few interesting novelties than by anything deeper in the way of local coloring or permanent delineation of what goes on daily in American life.

IV

It is sometimes said that there was never yet a great migration which did not result in some new form of national genius; and this should be true in America, if anywhere. He who lands from Europe on our shores perceives a difference in the sky above his head; the height seems greater, the zenith farther off, the horizon wall steeper. With this result on the one side, and the vast and constant mixture of races on the other, there must inevitably be a change. No portion of our immigrant body desires to retain its national tongue; all races wish their children to learn the English language as soon as possible, yet no imported race wishes its children to take the British

race, as such, for models. Our newcomers unconsciously say with that keen thinker, David Wasson, "The Englishman is undoubtedly a wholesome figure to the mental eye; but will not twenty million copies of him do, for the present?" The Englishman's strong point is his vigorous insularity; that of the American his power of adaptation. Each of these attitudes has its perils. The Englishman stands firmly on his feet, but he who merely does that never advances. The American's disposition is to step forward even at the risk of a fall. Washington Irving, who seemed at first to so acute a French observer as Chasles a mere reproduction of Pope and Addison, wrote to John Lothrop Motley two years before his own death, "You are properly sensible of the high calling of the American press, — that rising tribunal before which the whole world is to be summoned, its history to be revised and rewritten, and the judgment of past ages to be canceled or confirmed." For one who can look back sixty years to a time when the best literary periodical in America was called *The Albion*, it is difficult to realize how the intellectual relations of the two nations are now changed. M. D. Conway once pointed out that the English magazines, such as the *Contemporary Review* and the *Fortnightly* were simply circular letters addressed by a few cultivated gentlemen to the fellow members of their respective London clubs. Where there is an American periodical, on the other hand, the most striking contribution may proceed from a previously unknown author, and may turn out to have been addressed practically to all the world.

So far as the intellectual life of a nation exhibits itself in literature, England may always have one advantage over us, — if advantage it be, — that of possessing in London a recognized publishing centre, where authors, editors, and publishers are all brought together. In America, the conditions of our early political activity have supplied us with a series of

such centres, in a smaller way, beginning, doubtless, with Philadelphia, then changing to New York, then to Boston, and again reverting, in some degree, to New York. I say, "in some degree" because Washington has long been the political centre of the nation and tends more and more to occupy the same central position in respect to science, at least; while western cities, notably Chicago and San Francisco, tend steadily to become literary centres for the wide regions they represent. Meanwhile the vast activities of journalism, the readiness of communication everywhere, the detached position of colleges, with many other influences, decentralize literature more and more. Emerson used to say that Europe stretched to the Alleghanies, but this at least has been corrected, and the national spirit is coming to claim the whole continent for its own.

There is undoubtedly a tendency in the United States to transfer intellectual allegiance, for a time, to science rather than to literature. This may be only a swing of the pendulum; but its temporary influence has nowhere been better defined or characterized than by the late Clarence King, formerly director of the United States Geological Survey, who wrote thus a little before his death: "With all its novel modern powers and practical sense, I am forced to admit that the purely scientific brain is miserably mechanical; it seems to have become a splendid sort of self-directed machine, an incredible automaton, grinding on with its analyses or constructions. But for pure sentiment, for all that spontaneous, joyous Greek waywardness of fancy, for the temperature of passion and the subtler thrill of ideality, you might as well look to a wrought-iron derrick."

Whatever charges can be brought against the American people, no one has yet attributed to them any want of self-confidence or self-esteem; and though this trait may be sometimes unattractive, the philosophers agree that it is the only path to greatness. "The only

nations which ever come to be called historic," says Tolstoi in his *Anna Karenina*, "are those which recognize the importance and worth of their own institutions." Emerson, putting the thing more tersely, as is his wont, says that "no man can do anything well who does not think that what he does is the centre of the visible universe." The history of the American republic was really the most interesting in the world, from the outset, were it only from the mere fact that however small its scale, it yet showed a self-governing people in a condition never before witnessed on the globe; and so to this is now added the vaster contemplation of it as a nation of seventy millions rapidly growing more and more. If there is no interest in the spectacle of such a nation, laboring with all its might to build up an advanced civilization, then there is nothing interesting on earth. The time will come when all men will wonder, not that Americans attached so much importance to their national development at this period, but that they appreciated it so little. Canon Zincke has computed that in 1980 the English-speaking population of the globe will number, at the present rate of progress, one thousand millions, and that of this number eight hundred millions will dwell in the United States. No plans can be too far-seeing, no toils and sacrifices too great, in establishing this vast future civilization. It is in this light, for instance, that we must view the immense endowments of Mr. Carnegie, which more than fulfill the generalization of the acute author of a late Scotch novel, *The House with Green Shutters*, who says that while a Scotchman has all the great essentials for commercial success "his combinations are rarely Napoleonic until he becomes an American."

When one looks at the apparently uncertain, but really tentative steps taken by the trustees of the Carnegie Institution at Washington, one sees how much must yet lie before us in our provisions for intellectual progress. The numerical

increase of our common schools and universities is perhaps as rapid as is best, and the number of merely scientific societies is large, but the provision for the publication of works of real thought and literature is still far too small. The endowment of the Smithsonian Institution now extends most comprehensively over all the vast historical work in American history, now so widely undertaken, and the Carnegie Institution bids fair to provide well for purely scientific work and the publication of its results. But the far more difficult task of developing and directing pure literature is as yet hardly attempted. Our magazines tend more and more to become mainly picture books, and our really creative authors are geographically scattered and, for the most part, wholesomely poor. We should always remember, moreover, what is true especially in these works of fiction, that not only individual books, but whole schools of them emerge and disappear, like the flash of a revolving light; you must make the most of it while you have it. "The highways of literature are spread over," said Holmes, "with the shells of dead novels, each of which has been swallowed at a mouthful by the public, and is done with."

In America, as in England, the leading literary groups are just now to be found less among the poets than among the writers of prose fiction. Of these younger authors, we have in America such men as Winston Churchill, Robert Grant, Hamlin Garland, Owen Wister, Arthur S. Pier, and George Wasson; any one of whom may at any moment surprise us by doing something better than the best he has before achieved. The same promise of a high standard is visible in women, among whom may be named not merely such as Louise Chandler Moulton, Harriet Prescott Spofford, and Sarah Orne Jewett, but their younger sisters, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Edith Wharton, and Josephine Preston Peabody. The

drama also is advancing with rapid steps, and is likely to be still more successful in such hands as those of William Vaughn Moody, Ridgely Torrence, and Percy McKaye. The leader of English dramatic criticism, William Archer, found within the last year, as he tells us, no less than eight or nine notable American dramas in active representation on the stage, whereas eight years earlier there was but one.

Similar signs of promise are showing themselves in the direction of literature, social science, and higher education generally, all of which have an honored representative, still in middle life, in Professor George E. Woodberry. Professor Newcomb has just boldly pointed out that we have intellectually grown, as a nation, "from the high school of our Revolutionary ancestors to the college; from the college we have grown to the university stage. Now we have grown to a point where we need something beyond the university." What he claims for science is yet more needed in the walks of pure literature, and is there incomparably harder to attain, since it has there to deal with that more subtle and vaster form of mental action which culminates in Shakespeare instead of Newton. This higher effort, which the French Academy alone even attempts, — however it may fail in the accomplished results, — may at least be kept before us as an ideal for American students and writers, even should its demands be reduced to something as simple as those laid down by Coleridge when he announced his ability to "inform the dullest writer how he might write an interesting book." "Let him," says Coleridge, "relate the events of his own life with honesty, not disguising the feeling that accompanied them."¹ Thus simple, it would seem, are the requirements for a really good book; but, alas who is to fulfill them? Yet if anywhere, why not in America?

¹ *Quarterly Review*, vol. xcviii, p. 456.

SCIENCE

(1857-1907)

BY HENRY S. PRITCHETT

THE progress of science — like human progress in all directions — is a somewhat irregular process. In this process we can generally distinguish several stages, which, however, merge constantly into one another. The first stage is that of the collection of scientific data; the next, some sort of logical arrangement of the data; and finally, generalizations made in the effort to interpret the phenomena. This chronological arrangement, however, is subject to constant variations. The human mind is active in the construction of theories formed far in advance of positive knowledge; and while such theories are often erroneous, they nevertheless serve to stimulate investigation and to lead ultimately to truth. Scientific progress is thus made up of a continuous series of collections of fact, while efforts at interpretation occur, not in their chronologic order, but rather in the order in which the temperaments of men and the tendencies of the age may suggest.

For this reason it is seldom possible to compare sharply the state of science at two distinct epochs. There are, to be sure, discoveries which belong to a given year, but they are ordinarily the culmination of long periods of collection and comparison of facts, which represent rather processes than distinct efforts, and the men who contribute most to the collection and correlation of facts are often unknown to the public.

Furthermore, it is to be remembered when one considers physical science, that the facts and the phenomena of science are the same to-day as fifty years ago. Chemical reactions, the nature and the growth of microbe organisms, the trans-

formations of energy, are the same in nature to-day as they were a half-century ago. For this reason, the state of science at two distinct epochs cannot be contrasted in the same way as one might compare two epochs in a creative art, such as literature, in which a whole new school of authors may have grown up in consequence of a new social factor or a new literary cult.

Comparisons of scientific progress at two distinct epochs resemble rather two views from a mountain, one view-point a little higher than the other, each looking out upon the same topography, but showing hills and valleys and streams in greater detail or with greater clearness from one point than from the other by reason of the difference in altitude. In some such way one may compare the outlook in science to-day with that of a half-century ago; the facts and the phenomena are the same, the point of view has changed enormously.

To bring such a view within the compass of a brief discussion, one needs also to keep in mind two other facts. First, that in making such a comparison, one is viewing the scientific horizon, not from the standpoint of the specialist in any department of science, but rather from the standpoint of the educated American. Such a man is not interested in the minute subdivisions of science, nor in the names of the specialists who have served it; but rather in the outcome, in the direction both of utilitarian ends and of intellectual and moral results, which the progress of science promises to the race. Second, in making such a comparison from the standpoint of the general reader, it is most important to keep in view the

unity of human knowledge. Science is essentially one, and while, for the sake of convenience, it must be classified into numerous subdivisions, these parts have a relation to the whole. Thus, physical science not only concerns itself with the objective world, but it goes far beyond this and works at the relation between human circumstances and the necessary laws which govern physical objects. In the same way, the historical sciences transcend the social phenomena with which they are immediately concerned and attempt an interpretation of these in the light of physical law. Thus all divisions of science are inextricably yoked together in the common effort to explain the history of man, and the adjustment of the human race to its environment.

When one considers science in this larger aspect he realizes that the middle of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth are two extremely interesting epochs to compare. After centuries of accumulation of facts, the men of the first half of the nineteenth century had begun those great generalizations which the mid-century saw securely in the grasp of the human mind, and the fifty years which have since elapsed have borne a rich fruitage of those generalizations.

The fundamental contrasts which stand out most prominently in such a comparison may be grouped under four heads:—

1. The last fifty years have seen a great betterment of the theoretical basis of physical science.

2. This development has been marked by a notable stimulation of scientific research, a differentiation of scientific effort, and the creation thereby of a great number of special sciences or departments of science.

3. The possession of a secure theoretical basis and the intellectual quickening which has followed it have resulted in the application of science to the arts and to the industries in such measure as the world has never before known. These

applications have to do with the comfort, health, pleasures, and happiness of the human race, and affect vitally all the conditions of modern life.

4. Last, but perhaps in many respects the most significant of all, is the effect which has been produced upon the religious faith and the philosophy of life of the civilized world by the widespread introduction of what may be called the modern scientific spirit.

I shall endeavor to point out the more significant movements which group themselves under these four heads, begging the reader always to bear in mind the fundamental facts to which I have alluded, that is to say, the desire to present a view, not of the scientific specialist, but of the educated intelligent American; and secondly, to keep in mind at the same time, notwithstanding the differentiations of science, the essential unity of human knowledge.

The Betterment of the Theoretical Basis of Physical Science.

The fundamental sciences which have opened to us such knowledge of the laws of the universe as we now possess are mathematics, chemistry, and physics. The first of these deals with numerical relations, and it has been the tool with which the human mind has had most experience. It had advanced to a high stage of perfection long before any other branch of science had attained even respectable standing. Men learned to reason in abstract relations with great skill and proficiency long in advance of the time when they reasoned from physical phenomena to their cause. The end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth saw a galaxy of astronomers and mathematicians of whom Laplace and Gauss were the most fruitful, who carried mathematical treatment of the problems of astronomy and geodesy to a point which left little to be desired. The last century has seen little improvement in these processes, but mathematics has remained the most facile tool

in the hands of the physical investigator, in the interpretation of physical phenomena, and in the expression of the transformations of energy. But for the significant progress which has been made in the last fifty years we are indebted to the other two fundamental sciences, chemistry and physics. The first deals with the composition and transformation of matter; the second with energy and the transformation of energy.

The connection between physics and chemistry is so intimate that it is impossible to draw a line of separation. In general, we are concerned in chemistry with the elements which, by their combination, form various substances, and with the composition of these substances; while in physics we are concerned with matter as a mass, as a substance representing a fixed composition, though subject to changes of form and of place. Changes by which the identity of the body is affected, such as, for example, when hydrogen and oxygen combine to form water, are chemical changes and do not belong to physics; while changes which matter undergoes without altering its composition or destroying the identity of the body are physical and are part of the study of physics. Inasmuch, however, as chemical changes are accompanied by changes of energy, there is a broad region which belongs to the investigations both of the physicist and of the chemist, and which completely connects those two fundamental sciences.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, John Dalton announced his famous atomic theory, which has served to unify the known or suspected laws of chemical combination. Dalton discovered that to every element a definite number could be assigned, and that these numbers, or their multiples, govern the formation of all compounds. Oxygen, for instance, unites with other elements in the proportion of eight parts of weight, or some multiple thereof, and never in other ratios. With the help of these atomic weights — or combining parts, as they are sometimes

called — the composition of any substance could be represented by a simple formula. This theory had become well established by the middle of the nineteenth century as the thread upon which all chemical results hung, and the second half of the century began under the stimulation which this discovery brought about. Before this period, inorganic chemistry — that is, the chemistry of the metals, of earths, of common oxides, bases, and salts — had received the greatest attention, and during the first half of the nineteenth century inorganic chemistry embraced almost all the work of chemists. The second half of the nineteenth century has been the day of organic chemistry. It was at first supposed that the two fields of research were absolutely distinct, but this belief was overthrown by Woehler, who showed that urea, an organic body, was easily prepared from inorganic materials, and since that day a vast number of organic syntheses have been effected. Out of this study has grown the basis of the chemical theory of to-day, that is to say, the conception of chemical structure, which has placed the chemistry of the twentieth century upon a theoretical foundation vastly more secure and vastly more significant than that of half a century ago.

Briefly stated, this theory of chemical structure is as follows: Every atom, so far as its union with other atoms is concerned, is seen to have a certain atom-fixing power, which is known as its valence. For example, take hydrogen as the standard of reference, and consider some of its simplest compounds. In hydrochloric acid, one atom of hydrogen is added to one of chlorine. These elementary atoms combine only in the ratio of one to one. They are called "univalent," that is, their power of fixing or uniting with other atoms is unity. In water, on the other hand, a single oxygen atom holds two of hydrogen in combination, and so oxygen is called a bivalent element. Nitrogen, phosphorus, and other elements go still farther and are trivalent,

while carbon is a quadrivalent substance, forming, therefore, compounds of the most complex type. The theory as thus stated is no mere speculation. It is the statement of observed fact, and this shows that the atoms unite, not at hazard, but according to certain rules.

A notable advance took place in the years 1860 to 1870 in the discovery of a general law connecting all the chemical elements. That those elements are related was early recognized, but it was not until the epoch-making work of Mendeléeff that the periodic variation in their properties was recognized, and the connection between the valency of the atom and its properties and compounds was interpreted.

Within twenty years chemistry has been enormously developed upon its electrical side, both theoretically and practically. From a purely chemical point of view, probably the most important electrical phenomena are those of electrolysis. When a current of electricity passes through a compound solution, the latter undergoes decomposition, and the dissolved substance is separated into two parts which move with unequal velocities in opposite directions. The conducting liquid is called an electrolyte, and the separated parts, or particles, of the compound in solution are termed its ions. One ion is positively, the other negatively electrified, and hence they tend to accumulate around the opposite poles. Under suitable conditions, the separation can be made permanent, and this fact is of the greatest significance in the different processes of electrometallurgy.

The modern science of physics has its basis in the doctrine of the conservation of energy. This doctrine as stated in the words of Maxwell is: "The total energy of any material system is a quantity which can neither be increased nor diminished by any action between the parts of the system, though it may be transformed into any of the forms of which energy is susceptible." A little more than a half-century ago, our knowledge of

physics consisted in the main of a large mass of facts loosely tied together by theories not always consistent. Between 1845 and 1850 the labors of Mayer, Joule, Helmholtz, and Sir William Thomson had placed the theory of the conservation of energy upon firm ground, and for the last half-century it has been the basic law for testing the accuracy of physical experiments and for extending physical theory. To the presence of such a highly defined and consistent theory is due the great development which our generation has witnessed.

The most remarkable development of the half-century in the domain of physics has gone on in that field included under the name radio-activity, a development which bids fair to affect the whole theory of physical processes. By radiation is meant the propagation of energy in straight lines. This is effected by vibrations in the ether which fills all space, both molecular and inter-stellar. This theory is based upon the conception that the vibrations are due to oscillations of the ultimate particles of matter.

Experiments in vacuum tubes by various investigators led to a long series of most interesting results, culminating in the discovery by Roentgen in 1895 of the so-called X-rays. These rays have properties quite different from those of ordinary light. They are not deflected by a magnet and will penetrate glass, tin, aluminum, and in general metals of low atomic weight. In 1896, Becquerel discovered that uranium possessed the property of spontaneously emitting rays capable of passing through bodies opaque to ordinary light.

Shortly after the discovery of this property in uranium Madame and Professor Curie succeeded in separating from pitchblende two new substances of very high radio-activity, called radium and polonium, the latter named after her native land, Poland.

The radiations from these various substances are invisible to the eye, but act upon a photographic plate and discharge

an electrified body. A very active substance like radium will cause phosphorescent substances to become luminous.

If a magnetic field is applied to a pencil of radium rays the rays are separated out into three kinds, much as light rays are sifted out by passing through a prism. One set of rays is bent to the left, another to the right, and the third set keeps on in the original direction.

The emission of the particles which deviate to the left and right appears to proceed from explosions in some of the atoms of these substances. It is estimated that two hundred thousand millions are expelled from one gram of radium bromide every second, yet the number of atoms in a gram is so enormous that this rate of emission may continue some years without an appreciable wasting of the mass of the substance.

The discovery of these substances with their remarkable properties has not only led to interesting applications of the most novel kind, but has stimulated the imagination of investigators, and given rise to various new explanations of cosmic phenomena. For example, it has been suggested that the internal heat of the earth may be kept up by the heat emitted from radium and other radio-active matter. All such theories are yet in the speculative stage. It may be said in general that, while the phenomena presented by the radio-active substances have caused physicists to revise physical theory in respect to molecular energy, nothing has been discovered which is inconsistent with the fundamental law of the conservation of energy.

Progress no less real has been made in those sciences which deal with the study of the human body and the human mind. Physiology, during the last half of the nineteenth century, has gained nearly all our present knowledge of the chemistry of digestion and secretion and of the mechanics of circulation, while psychology has advanced from a branch of philosophy to the position of a distinctive science.

From whatever point of view one regards human progress, he will be led to realize that one of the greatest achievements of the race is the work of the army of scholars and investigators to whom is due the betterment in these fifty years of the theoretical basis of these two fundamental physical sciences, a basis which is not only intellectually sound, but intellectually fruitful. The roll of these names — chemists, physicists, biologists, inventors, investigators in all fields of human knowledge — is made up from all lands. It is a world's roll of honor in which not only individuals but nations have earned immortality. Of all the men whose names are here written, there are two whose work is so fundamental and far-reaching that the world is glad to accord to them a preëminence. These are the Frenchman, Louis Pasteur, and the Englishman, Charles Darwin.

The Differentiation of Science and the Development of Special Sciences.

Under the stimulus of the great fundamental theories which have tended to unify chemistry and physics, and also to direct attention to a vast field common to both and previously unexplored, a large number of special sciences, or divisions of science, have been developed. Once the law of chemical structure was ascertained and the possibilities were made evident which this law involved, and once the law of the conservation of energy was clear and the multiform transformations which might be made under such a law formulated, there was opened in every nook and corner of the physical universe the opportunity for new combinations and for new transformations. The result of this has been that in the last five decades physicists and chemists, having these threads in their hands as guides, have gone off into all sorts of by-paths. There has grown up through these excursions a great number of minor divisions of science, dependent on processes partly physical and partly chemical, but all related to one

another and to the fundamental sciences of chemistry and physics.

By means of that wonderful instrument, the spectroscope, has arisen the combination of the old science of astronomy with physics, known as astro-physics. There have been interesting gains in the older astronomy during this period, such as the discoveries of the new satellites of Mars, of Jupiter, and of Saturn, all by American astronomers; the discovery of some hundreds of asteroids with the unexpected form of some of their orbits; and the variation of the terrestrial latitude. All these discoveries are in the direction of the applications of gravitational astronomy upon the foundations laid by Newton, Laplace, and Gauss. The significant gains have come, however, in the new astronomy, which is really celestial physics, and are the outcome of the modern spectroscope and photographic plate. The motion of stars and nebulae in the line of sight, the discovery of invisible companions by the doubling of the lines of the spectrum, and above all, the determinations of the physical constitution of the distant suns and nebulae have thrown a great light not only upon cosmic evolution, but upon the probable history of our own planet. Perhaps no one result of the whole study is so significant at this: In the far-distant suns which shine upon us, as well as in our own sun, we find only those same elements which exist in our own soil and in our own atmosphere. Just as the law of the combination of chemical elements and of the conservation of energy points to a uniform physical law on our planet, so also the unity of material composition throughout the universe of stars seems to point with equal significance to a physical unity of the whole universe.

Early in the seventeenth century, certain "animalculæ," as they were called, became recognized as the simplest form of life; but the modern science of bacteriology dates from the epoch-making investigations of Pasteur and Koch, conducted within the last thirty-five years.

One of the most important steps was the introduction by Koch of trustworthy methods for separating individual bacterial species. Since many distinct species are indistinguishable from one another by size and shape, it was obviously impossible by the older methods of study to separate one from the other. Koch suggested the use of solid materials as culture media, thereby representing the conditions so often seen when such organic matter as bread becomes mouldy. He demonstrated that the addition of gelatin to the infusions employed for the successful cultivation of bacteria converted them into practically solid culture media without robbing them of any of their useful properties; and by the employment of such media it was possible to separate as pure cultures the individual species that one desired to analyze. The introduction of this method for the isolation and study of bacterial species in pure cultures constitutes perhaps the most important stimulus to the development of modern bacteriology.

The studies made by Pasteur upon fermentation and the souring of wine, and upon the maladies of silkworms, together with Koch's studies upon the infections of wounds, and the appropriate methods of analyzing them, were rich in suggestion to the workers in this new field. Two of the most important results have been in the application of these studies to the problems of the sanitary engineer and to the work of preventive medicine.

The drinking water of our cities is purified to-day by the process of natural sand filtration, by the septic tank process, etc. In these methods the living bacteria are the instruments by which the results are obtained. The sand grains in the filters serve only as objects to which the bacteria can attach themselves and multiply. By the normal life processes of the bacteria the polluting organic matter in the water is used up and inert material given off as a result.

But even more important than this

work of sanitation is the contribution of bacteriology to preventive medicine. Early in the course of his work, Pasteur discovered that certain virulent pathogenic bacteria, when kept under certain conditions, gradually lost their disease-producing power, without their other life properties being disturbed. When injected into animals in this attenuated state, there resulted a mild, temporary, and modified form of infection, usually followed by recovery. With recovery the animal so treated was immune from the activities of the fully virulent bacteria of the same species. The development of this fruitful idea has not only resulted in the saving of millions of money, but it has resulted as well in the prevention of human disease, the greatest triumph of modern science.

A study of the laws of physics and chemistry in relation to living plants and animals led in a similar way to the discovery that the processes of the entire race history are reflected in the processes of the growth of the embryo, a result which created the new science of embryology.

Similarly, in the studies of energy differentiations have gone on. Fifty years ago, our colleges had a single professor of what was called at that day natural philosophy. To-day, a modern college will divide this field among a corps of teachers and investigators, one devoting his attention to mechanics, another to heat, another to electricity, another to magnetism, and another to sound and light. In turn, electricity will be subdivided, the investigator concerning himself with a constantly narrowing field of phenomena, with the expectation of working out completely the problem whose solution is sought. All these departments of physical science, with their numerous subdivisions, are the offspring of the fundamental sciences chemistry and physics. No contrast is more striking in comparing the science of to-day with that of fifty years ago than this differentiation, unless it be the even more significant fact

that, notwithstanding this differentiation and division of labor, the essential unity of science is more apparent than ever before. Astronomy, geology, and biology were, fifty years ago, separate, and to a large extent unrelated, sciences. To-day they are seen to flourish in a common soil.

The Application of Science to the Arts and to the Industries.

In no other way has the march of science in the last half-century been so evident to the eyes of the average intelligent man as in its practical applications to the arts and industries. Modern life to-day is on a different plane from that of fifty years ago by reason of applied science alone. Whether this has added to the joy of living, and to the general happiness of mankind, is another question; but that it has raised the standard of health, that it has added enormously to the comfort and to the conveniences of man, no one can dispute. The house of fifty years ago lacked the facilities of pure water; it was illuminated, at the best, by imperfect gas jets; it was warmed by the old-fashioned stove; and if situated in an isolated place, communication was possible only by messenger at the expense of time and labor. The modern sanitary water service, electric lighting, modern means of construction, and the telephone, make the dwelling-house of to-day a wholly different place from the dwelling-house of fifty years ago.

Steam transportation had already begun its marvelous work before the epoch at which we start, but its great application has been made in the last half-century. Just as the fruitful theories of physics and chemistry have advanced physical science in all its applications, so also the elementary development and applications of steam have blossomed in the last half-century into a transportation system which makes the world of to-day a wholly different world from that of fifty years ago.

Perhaps the fundamental application

of science which has done the most to change the face of the civilized world is the invention by Sir Henry Bessemer of a cheap means of manufacturing steel from pig iron. On August 13, fifty-one years ago, he read before the British Association at Cheltenham a paper dealing with the invention which has made his name famous. His paper was entitled "The Manufacture of Malleable Iron and Steel without Fuel," and described a new and cheap process of making steel from pig iron by blowing a blast of air through it when in a state of fusion, so as to clear it of all carbon, and then adding the requisite quantity of carbon to produce steel. Not one man in ten thousand knows who Sir Henry Bessemer was or what he did, but every man who touches civilization leads to-day a different life from that which he would have led, by reason of Bessemer's invention. Cheap steel is the basis of our material advancement.

One of the most interesting applications of chemistry is that involved in the manufacture of aniline colors. Up to the time of the investigation of Sir William Perkin in 1856, commerce had depended on vegetable colors, which had been obtained at great cost and difficulty. That these rainbow hues could ever be procured from so insignificant a substance as coal tar seemed as improbable as anything which one could imagine, and yet from the labors of the chemist there have come in the last thirty years colors surpassing in beauty anything produced by nature. The manufacture of such colors has come to be a great industry, employing thousands of men and enormous capital, and this too out of a waste product which manufacturers were once quite ready to throw away.

One of the most interesting combinations of chemistry and physics is that shown in the modern photograph. Photography as an art had reached a considerable stage of development by the early fifties, but the wet collodion process, as it was called, while possible for the professional, was difficult for the amateur.

Plates had to be prepared and finished on the spot, transportation was difficult, and there was a demand for a process which could be used in the field as easily as in the office. The first step came in 1856 in the invention of what was called dry collodion, followed rapidly by similar inventions which did away with the troublesome preparation of the plate in the silver bath. Out of the process has grown the modern photographic dry plate, and the modern camera, an instrument so convenient and easy of transportation, and yet so safe and sure in its results, that on the wildest expeditions the most perfect photographs can be taken.

To-day the word which best represents to the popular mind the triumphant application of science is the word "electricity." The fruitful idea that electricity, like light, was only a form of energy, lies at the base of the great inventions which have been made. The moment that electricity was produced by transforming other forms of energy, there became possible all sorts of machines which could not be imagined under any other hypothesis. It was in the development of this idea that the inventors have perfected during this half-century the electric motor, the electric light, the telephone, and the thousand separate devices by which mechanical energy is transformed into electric energy, and this again into heat or light. It is the machines for these marvelous transformations which have been invented in the last generation that have made the greatest difference in our modern life. The storage battery, the arc light, the incandescent light, and the telephone have all come in as actual parts of our every-day life within the memory of men of middle age, and, as a crowning exploit of the century, telegraphy without wires brings us messages from ships in mid-ocean. In every department of domestic life, in every line of transportation, in almost all methods of communication between men and cities, the application of electricity has come to play a great rôle. So numerous are these applications, so

important are they to our comfort and to our well-being, that we have ceased to wonder at them, and year by year new applications are made which a few decades ago would have called forth astonishment, but which we receive as a part of the day's work. So great is this field, so promising are the applications which we may hope to see made, that no man can foretell what the inventions of the future may be.

To-day we are interested not less in the applications of electricity than in its supply. So well is the law of transformation of energy now understood and so sure are the results of our inventors, that we may confidently expect that the applications of electricity to the arts and industries will reach almost any point of perfection. A vital question is, can a supply of energy be found which can be efficiently and cheaply transformed into electric energy?

At present our chief source of electricity is coal, and the century just closing has given no particular indication of a possible rival to coal, unless it be water power. Over a large part of the earth's surface, however, neither coal nor water power is accessible. Furthermore, the supply of coal is limited. It is likely to become in the near future more and more expensive, and one of the great problems which the inventors of our day face is the problem of devising a cheap and effective source of energy for the production of power.

There is one source to which all minds revert when this question is mentioned, a source most promising and yet one which has so far eluded the investigator. The sun on a clear day delivers upon each square yard of the earth's surface the equivalent of approximately two horsepower of mechanical energy working continuously. If even a fraction of this power could be transformed into mechanical or electrical energy and stored, it would do the world's work. Here is power delivered at our very doors without cost. How to store the energy so gen-

erously furnished, and keep it on tap for future use, is the problem. That the next half-century will see some solution thereof, chemical or otherwise, seems likely.

Perhaps in no way have the applications of science so ministered to human happiness as in the contributions of the last fifty years to preventive medicine, surgery, and sanitation. Within this half-century Pasteur did his great work on spontaneous generation and in the development of the theory of anti-toxins. Following in his steps, Lister applied the principles which Pasteur had enunciated, in the treatment of wounds and sores. The whole outcome has been a splendid step forward, not only in such matters as the treatment of diphtheria, yellow fever, and malaria, but also in the direction of preventive medicine. The scientific world is organizing for a fight to the death with tuberculosis, that worst malady of mankind, and if there is any such advance in general education and in general knowledge during the next fifty years as in the last, it is not too much to hope that this dread scourge of humanity may be vanquished. In no direction in which science touches life is there a greater contrast between the life of fifty years ago and that of to-day than in these matters of preventive medicine, of surgery, and of sanitation; and it is worth recalling that these advances have come, not through the professional physician or surgeon, but through the laboratory investigations of the chemist and of the physicist. Applied chemistry and physics are the sources from which our sanitary and surgical gains have resulted.

A no less striking application of science in this half-century is to be found in those matters which affect transportation, whether on land or sea. Within this brief span of a generation and a half, steam transportation has been so enormously advanced that the transit of the largest oceans has become little more than a pleasure trip. Within this period the first electric car was set rolling over the earth's surface, and the whole development of

modern transportation, including the automobile, belongs to this half-century.

Equally impressive, but not so often referred to, are the applications of science in the transmission of intelligence. Fifty years ago the land telegraph was in its infancy, and its use was restricted to messages of pressing business importance. Within the span of time of which we are speaking, the telegraph has been developed into an indispensable adjunct of every civilized man's business. Submarine cables extended under the sea connect all the continents of the earth. Not only have these enormous changes come, but the invention of the telephone makes it possible to transmit the human voice across the space of hundreds of miles; and finally, as a first fruit of the twentieth-century inventor's work, wireless telegraphy sends its messages through the air from the distant ship to the shore. These applications, which enable each civilized man to know the business of all the rest, are to have an effect on our mode of life, on our relations with other nations, and on the general culture of the civilized world, such as we perhaps cannot even to-day imagine. One of the results of this development in America is the modern newspaper, filled with news from the ends of the earth. The ease of transmission makes it possible to report not only the important things, but the scandal and the gossip, each item of which ought to die in its own cradle. The modern sensational paper is one of the unripe fruits of the scientific applications of our age. Social development in the last half-century has lagged behind scientific progress and application. The education of the American people in obedience to law and in framing effective legislation for the distribution of the proceeds of production are far behind the scientific efficiency of the age. A serious question of civilization is, "How may the nation be rightly educated and wisely led, to the end that the tremendous productivity of applied science may ennoble and enrich, rather than vulgarize and corrupt it?"

The Effect of Modern Scientific Research on the Religious Faith and the Philosophy of Life of the Civilized World.

It is not too much to say that the development of science in these last five decades has produced a greater effect upon the beliefs and the philosophy of civilized man than that of all the centuries preceding. Fifty years ago the scientific world stood upon the brink of a great philosophical conception as to the origin of the system of nature which we see about us. The epoch-making work of Laplace and his contemporary mathematicians upon the development of the solar system, the researches of Lyell concerning the history of our own earth, the work of Buffon and Lamarck, the reflections of the earlier thinkers, like Leibnitz, Schelling, and Kant, all served in their respective branches of science to prepare the world for some generalizations as to the origin of life and the variations of living forms. In human history there had been recognized an evolution, one form of institution growing out of another, one race out of another, one language out of another. The evidence was beginning to be cumulative that the present is the child of the past, and that the living creatures which we see about us have been evolved, being descendants of ancestral forms on the whole simpler; that those ancestors were descended from still simpler forms, and so on backward. What was needed in 1857 was some well-grounded, intelligible explanation of the variation of species. This explanation came in 1859 in the publication of Charles Darwin's epoch-making book, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. Darwin showed that in natural selection, or what has also been called "the survival of the fittest," is found a natural process which results in the preservation of favorable variations. This process leads to the modification of each creature in relation to its organic conditions of life, and in most cases the change may be regarded as an advance in or-

ganization. "Darwinism" is not to be confused with "evolution." Darwin's name has been given to one particular interpretation of the process of evolution. The actual fact of development is proved from so many converging lines that there can be no doubt of the fact itself, although the future growth of our ideas may largely modify the explanation that Darwin has given of it.

Perhaps no single work has produced so great an impression upon the spirit of any age as has Darwin's memorable book upon the intellectual life of Europe and America. The book became at first the centre of a fierce intellectual discussion. Scientific men themselves were divided in their estimate of its importance and its soundness. In Boston, before the American Academy of Science and Arts, there went on during the winter of 1859 and 1860 one of the most spirited scientific debates which our country has ever known, between Professor Louis Agassiz in opposition to Darwin's theory and Professor William A. Rogers in favor of it. Both were eloquent men, both were eminent in science, and perhaps no series of discussions before a scientific body has been more interesting than those which these two great men carried on at this time.

The outcome of the work of Darwin and his successors has been the practical acceptance by civilized men of the general theory of evolution, however they may differ about the process itself. While the work of the scientific men who have built up the doctrine of evolution, which to-day stands more firmly than ever as a reasonable interpretation of organic nature, was a scientific one and had nothing to do with ultimate problems, nevertheless it was inevitable that such a theory should excite the strongest opposition on the part of the theology of that day. The acrimony of that discussion has long since worn away. Men have had in fifty years a breathing time sufficient to see that however opposed such an explanation of nature may be to the then

accepted orthodox theory of creation, neither one nor the other was necessarily connected with true religious life. To-day, in one form or another, nearly all educated men accept the general theory of evolution as the process by which the universe has been developed.

The chief effect, however, of the advance of science during these fifty years upon religious belief and the philosophy of life has come, not so much from the acceptance of the theory of evolution, or the conservation of energy, or other scientific deductions, but rather from the development of what is commonly called "the scientific spirit." To-day a thousand men are working in the investigations of science where ten were working fifty years ago. These men form a far larger proportion of the whole community of intelligent men than they did a half-century ago, and their influence upon the thought of the race is greatly increased. They have been trained in a generation taught to question all processes, to hold fast only to those things that will bear proof, and to seek for the truth as the one thing worth having. It is this attitude of mind which makes the scientific spirit, and it is the widespread dissemination of this spirit which has affected the attitude of the great mass of civilized men toward formal theology and toward a general philosophy of life. The ability to believe, and even the disposition to believe, is one of the oldest acquirements of the human mind. On the other hand, the capacity for estimating evidence in cases of physical causation has been a recent acquisition. The last fifty years has added enormously to the power of the race in this capacity, and in the consequent demand on the part of all men for trustworthy evidence, not only in the case of physical phenomena, but in all other matters. This spirit is to-day the dominant note of the twentieth century. It is a serious spirit and a reverent one, but it demands to know, and it will be satisfied with no answer which does not squarely face the facts.

This intellectual gain is the most noteworthy fruitage of the last fifty years of science and of scientific freedom.

A direct outcome of this development of scientific spirit has been the growth of what has come to be called the higher criticism. The higher criticism is a science whose aim is the determination of the literary history of books and writings, including inquiries into the literary form, the unity, the date of publication, the authorship, the method of composition, the integrity and amount of care shown in any subsequent editing, and into other matters, such as may be discovered by the use of the internal evidence presented in the writing itself. It is termed the higher criticism to distinguish it from the related science of lower, or textual, criticism. This science is almost wholly a child of the last half-century, and in particular is this true so far as Biblical study and criticism are concerned. The development of this school of study along scientific lines has, in connection with the wide spread of the scientific spirit itself, had an enormous effect on the attitude of civilized man toward formal theology and toward formal religious organizations.

What the outcome of this intellectual development will be, whether it will result in a change of the organizations themselves or the evolution of new organizations for religious teaching along other lines than those which now exist, no one to-day can say. Of this much, however, we may be fairly sure: that although the work of the evolutionists and the higher critics may have affected formal theology, there is no reason for belief that the innate religious spirit of mankind has been weakened. True religion is a life, not a belief; and the religious life of the twentieth century promises to be as deep and genuine, and perhaps more satisfactory, than that of the century before. To-day the figure of Jesus Christ looms larger to the world than it did fifty years ago, and partly for the reason that his life and work are

being studied apart from formal theology and independently of formal religious organization.

The general effect of the whole evolutionary development of the last fifty years upon the philosophy of life of civilized man has been a hopeful one. The old theology pointed man to a race history in which he was represented as having fallen from a high estate to a low one. The philosophy of evolution encourages him to believe that, notwithstanding the limitations which come from a brute ancestry, his course has been upward, and he looks forward to-day hopefully and confidently to a like development in the future.

One who looks over this half-century of development of science cannot but feel something of this hopefulness as he looks forward to the half-century just begun. So little do we know of nature and of nature's laws, so large is their intent in comparison, that we may confidently expect the discoveries of the next half-century to more than equal those of the half-century just passed. The applications of chemistry and of physics are now being pushed by thousands of men better trained for research than in any generation which preceded. Organized effort in scientific research is begun; transportation, already so highly developed, will become still more convenient. Preventive medicine may well be expected to make enormous strides in the struggle with the great plagues of mankind. The whole scale of human living, so far as comfort and convenience are concerned, we may confidently expect to improve as rapidly as it has in the fifty years gone by. The house of 1950 will be as much superior in comfort and convenience to our homes of to-day as these are to those of a half-century ago.

Finally, we may be sure that during the next fifty years, as during the past, that question which will most interest man is the old one, What is life and how came it to be? This question has not yet been answered by any fruitful hypo-

thesis like those of Darwin or Lamarck, which have been such effective tools in the hands of investigators. In the aid of the solution of this problem all scientific men are working, either consciously or unconsciously. Much of what they do seems trivial and dry in the eyes of those who are occupied with other thoughts. The man who is engaged in accumulating a million dollars may not easily understand how a student will toil patiently in a laboratory, laboriously gathering together minute data, in order that the generalizers of science may go a step farther in the solution of the great pro-

blem. To-day the world stands firmly convinced of the universal force of the principle of evolution, and on the other hand looks forward to the realization of independent life and action in the separate cell. Whether in the next half-century science may be able to vanquish the difficulty presented by that atom of living potential protoplasm, the cell, we cannot say, but we may feel sure that great steps toward its solution will be made, and that these steps will be taken in the service of the truth for the truth's sake, which is the watchword of the science of to-day.

ART

(1857-1907)

BY HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE

IN 1856, one year before the appearance of the first number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, Emerson published that penetrating analysis of national character, *English Traits*, and made it clear that Americans had begun to take account of the Old World from their own point of view; and it must be conceded that their judgment was both shrewd and ripe. It was singularly well-balanced, taking their isolation into the reckoning, and it went home to the bottom facts with uncompromising but not unsympathetic directness. Four years later, in the *Conduct of Life*, he discussed such matters of the higher civilization as Culture, Manners, Behavior, Beauty, with a historical sense of their values as sensitive as his insight into their essential, as contrasted with their conventional, meaning was fresh and authoritative. If there was a certain feeling of detachment in the attitude of the essayist, there was also an easy familiarity with his themes, which hinted at a long intimacy with them.

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Charles Dudley Warner speaks somewhere of the peculiar charm of highly bred Englishmen as a great simplicity of nature against an opulent background; the note of old New England was personal idealism in surroundings meagre to the verge of poverty in the elements of that organized beauty we call art. In his biography of Hawthorne Mr. James brought into painful distinctness the hard surface, the absence of shading, the rigidity of line and bareness of structure, which the youth who was to write *The Marble Faun* saw about him on all sides during the years of his brooding apprenticeship; and yet there was something in the soil, the air, the spiritual inheritance, which touched the imagination not only to the most subtle vision, but with a shadowy splendor beyond the reach of his contemporaries over sea. It was true, as Americans have said so often that they have come to believe it, that this was a new country, and therefore full of rawness and crudeness; but

they have forgotten that they were an old people, and that it is ripeness of knowledge of life, and not of landscape, that counts in reckoning with spiritual forces and products.

The colonists North and South did not come empty-handed to a new country; they brought with them the accumulated wealth of instinct, training, knowledge, and manners of the most highly developed countries of the Old World. There were excellent scholars in New England from the start; there were agreeable men and women in the middle colonies, who knew the finer habits of life; and there were charming manners and no little stateliness of habit in the South. The colonists were isolated, however, from a background which would have kept them in touch with the language of art in all its various dialects, and as time went on detachment bred a certain indifference. There were so many new and difficult things to be done, and done at once, that art had to wait for a more convenient season. The necessities of the new venture were so pressing that adaptation became the highest form of originality.

For many decades the men and women who inherited the riper conditions of living set the pace and kept the lead. The boisterous democracy which poured into Washington with President Jackson, and stood on the sofas of the White House in muddy boots, had not yet taken building and sculpture into its own hands. There were churches which charmed the eye and conveyed a sense of their uses to the mind in Portsmouth, Newport, New York, Wilmington, Charleston; and there were houses which happily harmonized material and form, and were suggestive of social background and vistas of an older social order, in Salem, Boston, Providence, Bristol, Newport, New York, Philadelphia, Germantown, Annapolis, Richmond, Charleston, and smaller towns. Colonial architecture at its best suggested a good tradition and expressed an honest fact; it expressed

history and a sound relation to the soil. It had that ultimate elegance, entire simplicity, which was characteristic of the best colonial life, and that dignity which was the stateliness of the Old modified by the conditions of the New World. The churches built under the inspiration of Sir Christopher Wren, and the fine old homes of which the Sherborne house in Portsmouth, the Jumel mansion in New York, and Mount Vernon may serve as examples, bore the impress of a certain distinction of taste and form which were the heritage of the few, but of inestimable importance to the many, as examples of true American architecture. They were as vitally related to their surroundings as are the gray old great houses of England and the square-towered country churches to the low skies and deep foliage of the ripe and mellow landscape. They constituted, with the Capitol at Washington and a little group of public buildings like Independence Hall in Philadelphia, a native order of building, adapted, it is true, but not imitative. They stood for Provincial America, with its face turned eastward, and still bound to Europe by kinship if not by identity of standards and interests.

Architectural chaos came much later, but the empire of the commonplace had been established in all parts of the country for several decades before the *Atlantic* began to stir the waters of national consciousness. American writers had been telling the truth for many years before later American builders began to do anything more radical than mumble a few commonplaces; when they started out to speak for themselves they made sad work of it. To begin with, they did not speak the truth; they were ungrammatical; worst of all, they were vulgar. During the period which followed the Civil War, and has been aptly called the reign of terror in American architecture, crimes against stone, wood, iron, and form of every kind were perpetrated, which still cry aloud for vengeance. It was in this period that post-offices and

other federal buildings were sown broadcast over a helpless land, and ugliness in almost unbroken monotony was set up as the symbol of public life. There were a few redeeming exceptions, but for the most part the state buildings of this period were monstrous offenses against public morals and public taste. This was the period, too, of the so-called reconstruction policy, which was such a shocking parody of the sublime tragedy of the Civil War; and it is significant that shining deeds of valor, and heroes whom youth and death had touched with a double beauty, were commemorated at this time with monuments and statues, of many of which it is merciful to write that they were executed not in malice, but in ignorance. Never before, perhaps, has a great sacrifice found such meaningless expression in monumental form; and it will be the pious task of a later generation to raze many of these monuments to the ground, and worthily commemorate a sublime chapter of national history.

During this lawless period all sorts of hybrids were brought to birth, and many still remain to remind us of our mortality: houses so entirely made with hands that no suggestion of mind flows from them; Italian villas (pronounced with a long I); stone castles with colonial additions; Elizabethan mansions with late Victorian piazzas and verandas; structures of no order but with vast cupolas; and, worst of all, riotous variations of that shamefully abused Queen Anne house, which, in its proper form and place, has a real relation to domestic life and to beauty of adaptation.

This outbreak of anarchy in building, this fierce passion for extreme individualism in construction, need not discourage the American who has seen the imperial palace at Strasburg, the atrocities of the *art nouveau* in the streets of Berlin, the bizarre villas which rival the zebra in the sunny fields of contemporary France, and the new government building on Whitehall in London. What we did in our ignorance Europe is now

doing in the presence of the noblest examples of the art of building. We, meantime, have repented our sins and, sitting in sackcloth and ashes, are beginning to understand that architecture is not a highly decorated front wall, attached to a structure to which it bears no more relation than the mask of a Greek actor bore to the man, but the art of building honestly, intelligently, with a sense of mass, proportion, surface, and shadow. It is true we are building the Tower of Babel again in many places, and a confusion of tongues has fallen upon us, so that the owner does not understand the architect, and the architect does not understand the opportunity, and the crowd of passers-by spend their energies in trying to count the stories and keep their hats on their heads while they are doing it. The task is a gigantic one, imposed by the enormous value of land in great centres, and by the pressure of population; but it is novel only in the new conditions it presents, not in unprecedented problems of altitude. One need only recall the wynds of Edinburgh and the beautifully decorated front of the old house of the Butchers' Guild in the square of Hildesheim to be made aware that the skyscraper is no modern nightmare of frenzied commercialism. Here and there one sees solutions of these problems, which are not mere masses of masonry for the housing of business, but highly organized structures, with new suggestions of the majesty of an art whose great function is to assert the sovereignty of the builder over every form and mass of materials. In all the larger cities there are private houses of a beauty and fitness which make one aware that wealth of the newest kind has learned where to go for direction; and the sense of public outrage created by the attempt to reproduce a log house in stone in New York, and to raise it to a height of seven or eight stories, bears eloquent testimony to the education of taste, which has led us out of the reign of terror into a kind of anticipatory reign of righteousness.

There was admirable building in the colonial and sub-revolutionary period; then came the age of the commonplace and the monotonously undistinguished; to be followed, after a great national crisis, by an outbreak of self-assertion, which was anarchistic in its wild and truculent disregard of authority, principle, and law; a flamboyant declaration of the right of the free American citizen to make his country as ugly as he chose; a riot of ignorance, bad taste, extravagance, and crude independence.

Meanwhile the *Atlantic* was printing prose and verse of an order which showed that in literature Americans not only had *something to say, but knew how to say it*. Lowell was an invaluable asset in the general exploitation of bad grammar and slang in popular architecture; and a large group of writers of fiction, North and South, were dealing with the realities of life with the sympathetic insight and sense of form which showed again how near to art are the common things of experience when they are sincere, unaffected, and unconscious.

Nor must it be forgotten that in the darkest days of marble palaces with painted iron columns, and of bastard Queen Anne cottages rising sanguinary and ostentatious above diminutive lawns, builders who were also architects, or architects who were also builders, as in the "elder days of art," were patiently trying to persuade their clients that building was an ancient art and not a local job; and that an increasing number of those who were teachable in those matters made life more tolerable in prosperous communities. The remnant of the elect increased not only in knowledge, but in influence, and the statement by a well-known architect that American architecture is the art of covering one thing with another thing to imitate a third thing, which, if genuine, would not be desirable, began to lose point. Upjohn, Renwick, Hunt, Richardson, Root, and White suggest a movement in education, and a genuine achievement in an art

which more than any other ought to have in this country a hand as free as its opportunity is great. If vagaries are still seen in stone, wood, and iron, and if the ready adapter and servile imitator are still in the land, there are increasing evidences of the presence of the artist and of the patron who is wise enough to give him his chance.

American painting has passed through gray and uneventful years, but it has never known a reign of terror. The patron rarely orders a picture in advance; he buys the finished product, or he leaves it in the studio as he chooses. The painter is not indifferent to the taste, or lack of taste, of his possible purchaser; but he is not compelled to stand, brush in hand, and put another man's ideas on canvas. This is precisely what the architect had to do in the rowdy and swagger period of building in this country; he was not without responsibility, but he was the victim of a general condition. The painter might be and often was feeble, but he was not compelled to violate the canons of his art to make the most sensational use of the money at his command. Like the architect, he began to practice his craft for a group of people who gave the community its standards of taste, and who had a very respectable standard to give their less cultivated neighbors. He did not develop a new and admirable manner, as did his fellow craftsman in wood and stone; but he gained such use of his materials that he established himself on a fraternal basis with the painters in London and Paris. It is true, the earlier painters were English rather than American, and it is also true that they did not rank with the best; but the best, it ought to be remembered, were Reynolds and Gainsborough. Copley and Stuart made places for themselves in the history not only of American, but of English art; though their rank in the colonies was much higher than in the mother country. To them and to their pupils we owe not only a tradition of sound workmanship, but a large group of portraits which are

of immense social and historical interest. They were the most graphic and vital historians of the older American society. It was inevitable that they should be English in taste and manner, since they were dealing almost entirely with English faces at a time when Americans were still Englishmen in new surroundings; the best service they could render to their contemporaries was to make them familiar with good work. Less fortunate artists who began by painting signs ended in several cases by painting good portraits and miniatures. John Wesley Jarvis, who was born in England and named after his famous uncle, was taken to Philadelphia at an early age, and got his education in the irregular manner of a country in which the value of art schools was a matter of remote future discussion. "In my school days," he writes, "the painters of Philadelphia were Clark, a miniature painter, and Galagher, a painter of portraits and signs; he was a German who, with his hat over one eye, was more *au fait* at walking Chestnut Street than at either face or sign-painting. Then there was Jeremiah Paul, who painted better and would hop farther than any of them; another who painted red lions and black bears, as well as beaux and belles, was old Mr. Pratt, and the last that I remember of that day was Rutter, an honest sign-painter, who never pretended or aspired to paint the human face divine, except to hang on the outside of a house; these worthies, when work was plenty, flags and fire-buckets in demand, used to work in partnership, and I, between school hours, worked for them all, delighted to have the command of a brush and a paint-pot. Such was my introduction to the fine arts and their professors." Copley, West, Stuart, Peale, Trumbull, and Allston were court painters in ease of condition compared with some of their obscure fellow craftsmen in the country; and, taking into account their limitations of temperament, they were not unequal to their opportunities.

There were commonplace painters be-

tween the later pupils of West and the generation of Kensett, Whittredge, and Gifford; but neither during that period nor later was there a reign of terror in American painting; there was, on the contrary, a more or less steady gain in craftsmanship and originality. Whatever may have been the limitations of the group of gifted men who are popularly regarded as belonging to the Hudson River School, they were trained in good traditions, and they interpreted the landscape of the country for the first time with deep feeling and sympathetic knowledge. They were men of generous and enthusiastic nature, and the breadth and wildness of American scenery moved them to large artistic endeavors. Their work was done out of doors, in a spirit of resolute fidelity to what they saw, and with simplicity of method. In the work of Mr. Worthington Whittredge, who has survived all his earliest contemporaries, to be in a sense the custodian of their traditions, and to be held in great honor by his successors, the feeling for depths of shadow in the hidden places of the forest, with just light enough sifting through the foliage to make the scene visible, is expressed with the utmost sincerity.

If the vastness of scale of American scenery appealed to Church and Bierstadt, its poetry was felt by Inness, Martin, and Wyant, whose development was contemporaneous with the early decades of the life of the *Atlantic*, and in whose work there was an individuality of insight and of expression which showed that the apprentice period in American painting was at an end, and the day of distinctive achievement at hand. Mr. Vedder reached his majority in 1857, and with him enters the element of mystery, the suggestion of fate, into American painting. There was nothing esoteric in his interpretations of figures and faces; no pretense on the part of the artist to the possession of a secret cipher, an occult knowledge, which his art implied but did not betray; on the contrary, its most potent suggestiveness is the feeling it

conveys that the artist saw and painted something as essentially unknowable to him as to his most intelligent student. When the illustrations to the *Rubáiyát* appeared in 1887 Mr. Vedder's work was well known by a few lovers of art, but that vague and cold collective person, "the general public," successor of the "gentle reader," had no acquaintance with it. The suggestiveness and power of the pictorial interpretation of Omar Khayyám deeply impressed the imagination of the country, not only because the manner was novel and the matter in striking contrast to the prevailing mood, but because the form was at once simple and fundamentally unified, and obviously and broadly beautified. The work was almost classical in its definiteness, but the richness of its texture, the solidity of its presentation, the liberal use of emblems and symbols, gave it a quality remote from familiar things, and kept the painter well in front of the philosopher. In the work of Mr. Vedder, as in that of Inness and Martin, the imagination began to move along original lines and to disclose a fresh and powerful impulse.

Five years after the birth of the *Atlantic* William Morris Hunt settled in Boston, and began a career which was too short to fulfill the hopes it awakened. If there was something lacking in mastery of technique, there was, in *The Bathers*, in *the Boy and the Butterfly*, in the decorations which gave distinction to the Albany Capitol and were sacrificed, — as art always is when it is innocently involved in a political job, — and in many of the portraits, a rich language of temperament, a luminousness, a command of tones full of ardor and passion, which revealed the presence of a genius trained in the Old but reveling in the freedom and audacity of the New World.

Whistler and Mr. La Farge came of age close upon the appearance of the *Atlantic*, and, in very diverse ways, exhibited that happy coming together of genius and culture which precedes fertility of high-class work in all the arts,

and which, in the case of these two painters, gave American painting secure place in the critical opinion of the world. The work of both craftsmen was saturated with feeling, with personality of rare quality, and irradiated again and again by the magic of inspiration. Happily one still writes of Mr. La Farge in the present tense, but the completeness of the disclosure of his gifts in the comparatively small mass of his work makes it proper to speak of it as a complete achievement. It may be said of him with safety, as of Whistler, that he has never sacrificed art to any kind of expediency, nor shaped his work to any passing interests; but, with the unswerving fidelity of a man of deep artistic instincts, has served his country by regarding not what it craved, but what alone could finally satisfy it. The note of distinction in his work, as in that of Whistler and of a considerable group of younger painters, has been an immense consolation to those who have feared that the price for the obvious material comforts of democracy might be a loss of fineness of feeling, of a certain elevation, dignity, and superiority of ideal and manner never lacking in the greater achievements of art.

Whistler published the *Normandy* etchings the year after the *Atlantic* was born; four or five years later his portraits of his mother and of Carlyle appeared; to be followed in the next decade by the incomparable etchings of Venice, of the Thames, of glimpses of the sea, of those odds and ends of buildings whose decay the twilight or the distance touched with a charm incommunicable by a hand less sensitive, subtle, and sure. Against an English background the audacity and brilliancy of Whistler's mind and temperament, his amazing skill in the dialects of verbal warfare, the flash and sting of his repartee, were immensely heightened, and prove him the alien he always claimed to be. His skill in expression was little short of magical; and if, in the dispassionate judgment of his work by future generations, it shall seem to lack

fundamental power, there can be no skepticism touching its beauty, subtlety, delicacy, — the specific qualities which many critics have agreed must perish under the blight of democracy.

American painting had ceased to be isolated and provincial long before the United States had been forced out of a seclusion from the affairs of the world, which it cherished as a historic policy after the conditions of modern civilization had entirely changed and the endeavor to separate privilege from responsibility had become as futile as it was selfish. Men whose work bore the marks of locality as distinctly as that of Eastman Johnson and of Winslow Homer; of personal idealism ascending at times to the height of vision, as that of Fuller among the older and Thayer among the younger men; of brilliant and audacious character reading and brush work, as that of Sargent; of forceful or charming individuality of observation of nature and of the human face, as that of Tryon, Brown, Foster, Brush, Walker, Beckwith, Alexander, Cecilia Beaux, — to select a few out of many representative names, — by a common sincerity of feeling, by great diversity of gifts, and by high seriousness of spirit, emancipated American painting from provincial tastes, local standards, and national complacency.

When the *Atlantic* was born American sculpture was a matter of a few names, a few pieces of well-cut marble, and a considerable mass of pretty and meaningless reminiscences of Italian *ateliers*. Ignorance of the art was widespread, and where ignorance ended prejudice began. There was a chilling suspicion of the decency of sculpture, and the unhappy artist who hinted at the existence of the human form under clothes was regarded as a dealer in immorality. In Philadelphia, twelve years before the appearance of the *Atlantic*, a few casts from the antique created something very like a public scandal; and when, at an earlier period, Greenough's Chanting Cherubs, the first group by an American sculptor,

was exhibited, a storm of condemnation enveloped the undraped figures; nude babies were familiar in American homes, but their appearance in public shocked the moral sense of the whole community. This was in New York where, still earlier, gentlemen who lived by piracy had been influential members of society. The symbolism of Powers's Greek Slave, and the passionate sympathy with the Greek struggle for freedom, diverted attention from the nudity of the figure to the pathos it expressed; but it was thought necessary, in the interests of public morals, that the fair captive should be examined by a committee of experts. Accordingly a group of clergymen in Cincinnati sat as a jury and, after a critical examination of the figure, issued a kind of license for purposes of public exhibition. The humor of submitting the statue to the inspection of a committee of clergymen does not seem to have occurred to any save a few Americans who had been corrupted by familiarity with foreign galleries; nor does any one appear to have realized that the real immorality was not in the timid slave but in the public opinion which hailed her effigy as the greatest work of art in the history of the world!

These significant facts explain the eager haste with which Greenough, Powers, and Crawford fled to Italy and remained in that more genial clime. The sin of self-consciousness which made Americans blush when the human form was mentioned in polite conversation, the lack of public interest, the dense ignorance of public taste, and the absence of examples of the art and of fine marble, drove the little group of sculptors into life-long exile. Houdon, the Frenchman, and Cerrachi, the Italian, had done some interesting work in this country; Rush and Augur had been timidly prophetic in wood and stone; there were Italian carvings in some of the old colonial homes; but it was still very early dawn in American sculpture when Greenough, Powers, and Crawford became professional sculptors. Greenough and Crawford,

despite the unevenness of their work and their partial success in large undertakings, made contributions of lasting artistic and historical value to the art that they practiced with passionate fidelity. Powers lacked temperament, vigor, the creative imagination; he never escaped the trammels of the Italian tradition, and set his hand boldly and strongly to original work; but he carved some admirable portrait busts, full of character, firm in manner, and faithful in likeness.

How far the country had yet to go in understanding and appreciation of sculpture is brought out by the fact that five years after the appearance of the *Atlantic* the National Congress commissioned a girl of fifteen, after an education in her art which lasted a twelvemonth, to execute a statue of Lincoln, which now stands in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, among other effigies of departed statesmen whose enforced absence alone secures the safety of the collection. In that melancholy hour the country was standing, however, on the threshold of that day of free and varied creativeness which has given contemporary American sculpture a place of the first importance in the interest of the artistic world. In no art was there for the first seventy years of the national life so little promise; in none has there been so great an achievement.

In the *Atlantic* year, 1857, Mr. Ward first modeled his Indian Hunter, which now stands, alert, alive, convincing, set low as if gliding through the shadows in the foliage of New York's beautiful park. Eleven years later Saint Gaudens, whose death falls like a shadow over the awakening love of beauty in America, received the commission for the statue of Farragut, which put him at the forefront of American sculptors, and made an immediate impression on monumental art in the country. No figure set up in any public place in America has spoken with such simplicity and humanness of speech to the mighty tides that stream

past it on the most crowded of American thoroughfares, nor has any more distinctly given a fresh and invigorating impulse to an art but lately emancipated from foreign influence and timidly venturing to give its soul play. The Lincoln in the Chicago park which bears its name has been accepted as the greatest portrait statue in the New World; the beautiful and baffling figure in the Rock Creek Cemetery in Washington, clothed with majesty of the mystery of death; the Shaw Memorial in Boston, with its moving column of negro soldiers fast upon the leader who rides, young and immortal, into the ranks of the dead; and, finally, the superb Sherman Memorial at one of the entrances to Central Park, New York, held securely on its pedestal, but moving, invincible, and alive, like its great fellow in Venice: these are achievements to be reckoned with, not only as forming an inspiring chapter in the development of American sculpture, but as a lasting contribution to the art of the world. What a distance these works register from tentative work of the earlier sculptors; from Palmer's charming ideal heads, and those graceful figures which did so much to awaken popular interest in sculpture; from Ball's impressive monumental work; from the varied and cultivated creations of Story, that fascinating and many-sided American, whose life was so full of interest and occupation, and who was fluent in so many languages of art that nothing he accomplished quite expressed his vitality or fulfilled his promise!

The fine poise and noble serenity of Mr. French's work, in which the skill of the craftsman and the power of revealing beauty and strength to men untrained in art, are happily united; the virile audacity and boldness of Mr. Macmonnies; the striking and forceful originality of Mr. Barnard; Mr. Bartlett's Lafayette, with its indefinable air of distinction, and his Genius of Man at the Pan-American Exposition; Mr. Boyle's Stone Age, in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia;

Mr. Adams's gracious and unfailingly fascinating portrait busts; Mr. Elwell's figures of Ceres and Kronos at the Buffalo Exposition; Mr. Ruckstuhl's strongly conceived Spirit of the Confederacy; Mr. Partridge's meditative study of Tennyson; Mr. MacNeil's Sun Vow; Mr. Lopez's Sprinter; Mr. Pratt's Andersonville Prisoner Boy; Mr. Dallin's Signal of Peace; Mr. Brighurst's Kiss of Eternity; Mr. Taft's Solitude of the Soul — to select a few representative works out of a great multitude — show how far the art of sculpture has gone in mastery of tools, courage of individual taste, variety and freshness of manner and subject, since the days when Greenough, Powers, Crawford, and Story found in Italy a refuge from the ignorance and indifference of their fellow countrymen.

The record of the progress of music has not been unlike that of sculpture. If it could be recalled in baldest outline, touching only its points of new departure, it would show the same general features. It was, for obvious reasons, more widely appreciated in the earlier times than sculpture, but its intelligent students were few, in spite of the fact that the old-fashioned schools for young women placed the study of music side by side with needlework, "elegant deportment and polite conversation." There was a great deal of that kind of music which Dumas called "the most expensive form of noise." A musical people could not and would not have accepted the *Star-Span-gled Banner*, with its terrible interrogatory "Oh, say," as a national anthem. There were homes, and even communities, in which singing and instrumental music were matters of taste and skill as well as of heart; but the country at large was a barren wilderness so far as the "concourse of sweet sounds" was concerned. To-day, in many large cities, it is impossible to make use of musical opportunities, so many and so interesting are they. In no art has there been so rapid and so wide a growth of intelligent interest during the last fifty years.

In nearly all the large cities orchestras of thorough training are to be heard, and permanent organizations of highly educated musicians are fast becoming a feature of life in the large centres. New York supports two houses devoted to grand opera, and musical programmes of every sort and kind are rendered to crowded audiences. It is true, all the other cities in the country are agreed that this musical interest is a fad, but it is equally true that it is so persistent and discriminating that it deceives the elect leaders of the Old World who conduct the New York orchestras from time to time, and are deluded into the belief that the metropolis is a musical city. Boston listens without impeachment of her intelligence to her admirable orchestras, and educates an almost innumerable host of students in music. Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Chicago, Cincinnati, have the most substantial claims to consideration as centres of interest in musical matters; while the growing enthusiasm for musical festivals in such towns as Worcester, Montclair, and many other communities may be safely taken as indicative of a steadily widening area of knowledge and appreciation. Music is taught in some of the older colleges by teachers who are also composers, while in the young and vigorous institutions of the Central West the love of the art is a popular movement.

Side by side with an immense amount of vulgarity in sound, of hideous "rag-time" profanity, there is a growing critical sense in music. Stephen Foster's touch on the springs of emotion in "The Old Kentucky Home," "Old Folks at Home," "Nellie was a Lady," and other melodies which the whole continent sang or hummed sixty years ago, was a prelude to a very considerable production of popular music, lacking in classical quality, but with a certain naïve originality and significance in our musical development, as Dvorak was quick to see when he composed the New World Symphony. Such teachers as Professors

Paine and Parker, who have been creators in the field in which they have long been conspicuous leaders in thoroughness of education; such composers as McDowell, Chadwick, Hadley, Foote, Kelley, and Converse, and such conductors as Thomas, the elder Damrosch, Seidl, and Gericke, have brought Americans out of the desert of the mediocre and cheap in an art which has, perhaps more than any other, given freest and deepest expression to the modern temper and attitude, into a land of abundant and increasing fertility and refreshment.

In every art save that of writing there has been a notable advance in the last half-century, and in the matter of writing we must not be blinded by the light of the few names which sum up the substance of our early literary achievement. If there has appeared no peer of Hawthorne, Poe, or Emerson, there has appeared a large group of writers who have reported American local conditions, and rendered American character, with an insight and delicacy of feeling, and an art at once so sincere and so beautiful, that in their field they are likely to be placed by later judgment quite on a level with their predecessors. Nor must it be forgotten that American literature, which, half a century ago, was the possession of the Atlantic seaboard and chiefly of a single section, is now the possession of the whole country, and draws its material from every locality and its subjects from every class. It has made immense gains in range of sympathy, breadth of feeling, and that quick interest in men as men, without regard to the accidents of condition, which is the very spirit of democracy. It has lost nothing in refinement of feeling or purity of taste; and it is dealing more boldly and fundamentally with the facts of life. The vitality and grip of actualities of such work as that of Frank Norris were not directed and sustained by adequate art, but they point the way to future achievement.

The majority of the men and women who gave American life its form and

direction were not the children of an artistic race, though they were the heirs of a great literature. They descended from a people who have never pursued art as an end, and whose first instinctive expression in meeting great experiences has never been artistic; but who have never divorced action from vision, nor failed, in the long run, to match power in action with some kind of beauty in speech. From its English ancestry the country has inherited an ingrained and ineffaceable idealism of nature, which enormous tasks and hitherto incredible prosperity have at times smothered and blighted, but never destroyed. From other races have come richer temperament, quicker sensibilities, craving for joy, and love of beauty for its own sake, which have already immensely enriched American art and are sub-soiling American life.

There was a certain thinness about the earlier literature, as there was a certain lack of blood in the American physique; there was a preponderance of nervous energy and activity; a self-consciousness not without noble moral antecedents, but destructive of the spontaneity of feeling, joy of spirit, and capacity for detachment which prepare the way for a rich growth of art. The American physique has lost its angularity; the American conscience no longer torments itself by the endeavor to close the books of immortal account every night and strike a balance between good and evil; the American mind is fast discovering that life is measured not by quantity, but by quality, and that energy without adequate ideas is a mere turning of wheels in the air. The idealism which took one form in early New England and another in the Old South has taken still another in the Central West; but everywhere it persists. It has been so far chiefly a matter of life; but it will inevitably become a matter of art. It has often taken forms so uncouth or so humorous that those who look only at the surface and never see the flower until it is in full bloom have entirely failed to recognize it; and have fallen into the error of call-

ing a very impressionable and essentially idealistic people, swayed by sentiment in the most important matters, and instantly responsive to every appeal to their generosity, "materialistic money-makers."

Taking into account the pressure of unescapable tasks, the temptations of unprecedented opportunities, the heroic toil of ordering a new world, the history of

art in this country during the half-century since the birth of the *Atlantic* justifies the prediction made long ago by Colonel Higginson: "Between Shakespeare in his cradle and Shakespeare in *Hamlet* there was needed but an interval of time; and the same sublime condition is all that lies between the America of toil and the America of art."

POLITICS

(1857-1907)

BY WOODROW WILSON

WE are separated from the year 1857 as men of one age are separated from those of another. We live amidst scenes and circumstances to which the events of that day can hardly be made to seem even a prelude. A stupendous civil war and the economic and political reconstruction of a nation have been crowded into the brief space of fifty years, — one era closed and another opened, — and it hardly seems possible that men now living can recollect as the happenings of a single lifetime events which seem to have wrought the effect of a couple of centuries. It was in fact the completion of one great process and the beginning of another. The process by which a nation was created and unified came at last to an end, and a still more fateful process began which was to determine its place and example in the general history of the world. Whether the new century we have entered upon will carry us to the completion of another phase of our life remains to be seen.

So far, a century seems to have been our dramatic unit: one century, the seventeenth, we spent upon the processes of settlement; another, the eighteenth, in clearing the continental spaces we had chosen for our own of all serious rivals,

the Spanish, the Dutch, the French, and in making ourselves free of oversight and interference from over sea; a third in constituting a nation, giving it government and homogeneity of life and institutions; and now we have entered upon a fourth century, and are sometimes in doubt what we shall do with it. We have for the nonce no clear purpose or programme. We are finding ourselves in a new age, amidst new questions and new opportunities, and shall have a clear vision of what we are about only when common counsel shall have further steadied and enlightened us.

If assessed by events, the year 1857 was not a year of particular significance. It was rather a year between times, when the sweep of events seemed to pause, and some were tempted to interpret the signs of the times as signs of peace, it seeming on the surface as if old issues were in some sort concluded and a time of settled policy at hand. Men who looked beneath the surface could, of course, see that no peace or settled mode of action could come out of opinions and policies constituted as were the opinions and policies they then saw to be the ruling elements of politics. Such, among others, were the men who founded the *Atlantic Monthly*.

And yet it was at least a year quiet and undisturbed enough to afford the historian an opportunity to look about him, and take stock of what had come and was coming. It was a year in which one chapter may close and another open, as if at a pause or turning-point in the narrative.

The year 1856 had witnessed a presidential election, and in March, 1857, Mr. Buchanan became President in the place of Mr. Pierce, Democrat succeeding Democrat; but some significant things had taken place within the Democratic ranks within the four years that had elapsed since Mr. Pierce was elected. In 1848, Mr. Polk, the Democratic candidate, had carried fifteen out of the twenty-six states that then constituted the Union; in 1852 Mr. Pierce had received the electoral votes of every state except Vermont, Massachusetts, Tennessee, and Kentucky; but Mr. Buchanan had received the support of no states outside the South except Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Indiana, and Illinois. His party, from being national, had seemed amidst the new ordering of affairs to become of a sudden little more than sectional, and, in spite of its success and its apparent confidence, seemed touched, as other parties were, with change and decay. The Democratic party had had its easy successes at the last three presidential elections largely because other parties were going to pieces and it held together unbroken and with definite purpose with regard to the main issues of the day; but at last its own followers were yielding to the influences of divided opinion, and few besides its southern adherents remained steadfast of purpose.

The slavery question had proved an effectual dissolvent of parties, — not the question of the continued existence of slavery in the Southern States, but the question of the extension of slavery into the regions of settlement where new territories and states were being erected. It seemed a question impossible of definitive settlement until the ceaseless movement of population should come naturally

to an end and the spaces of the continent should have been filled in everywhere with communities which had chosen their own order of life. Attempt after attempt had been made to determine it beforehand. The great Ordinance of 1787, contemporaneous with the making of the Constitution itself, had excluded slavery from the broad Northwest Territory which the States had ceded to the Union as a nursery of new commonwealths; the Missouri Compromise had excluded it from so much of the territory embraced within the Louisiana Purchase as lay north of the southern boundary of Missouri extended; and the extensive State of California, a small empire of itself, cut out of the vast territories snatched from Mexico, had been admitted as a State with a constitution of her own making which excluded slavery, thus determining the critical matter for the only portion of that great region with regard to which the movement of population rendered its immediate settlement imperative. Settlers by the tens of thousands had rushed into California upon the discovery of gold. The discovery had been made the very month the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo was signed (February, 1848), and before Congress was ready to legislate for the new possessions, California had become a self-governing community of the familiar frontier pattern, with ruling spirits to whom it was impossible to dictate laws they did not like. The gold-hunters and the tradesmen who went with them neither had slaves nor wanted them, and Congress had no choice but to admit them as a state upon terms of their own making. And the rest of the Mexican cession it left open to be taken care of by the fortunes of settlement and the preference of its first occupants, after the same fashion. Such had been the terms of the famous Compromise of 1850, which also shut the odious slave trade out of the District of Columbia and provided southern slave-owners with a stringent Fugitive Slave Law which enabled them to recover their runaway slaves by simple

and effective process through the action of the local officials of the federal government itself. That great Compromise, upon which Mr. Clay had spent the last years of his life and power, — that latest "settlement" of the irrepressible question, — was but six years old when Mr. Buchanan was chosen President.

But each successive handling of the critical matter seemed rather to unsettle than to determine it; and this last attempt to deal with it proved the least conclusive of all, — seemed, indeed, purposely to leave it open with regard at any rate to so much of the Mexican cession as was not included within the boundaries of the new State of California. Mr. Calhoun had explicitly denied the right of the federal government to exclude slaves, the legal property of such settlers as might come from the South, from the territories of the United States, and had declared it as his opinion, and that of all southern men who thought clearly of their rights under the partnership of the Union, that the people of the several territories, wherever situated, whether on the one side or the other of compromise lines, had the constitutional right "to act as they pleased upon the subject of the status of the negro race amongst them, as upon other subjects of internal policy, when they came to form their constitutions," and to apply for admission to the Union as states. The Compromise of 1850 had been framed upon that principle; and that compromise was not four years old, Mr. Calhoun was not four years dead, before the new principle had been enacted into law, to the sweeping away of all former compromises and arrangements.

It had been an astonishing reversal of policy, brought about by a man of surprising vigor and directness, who for a little while seemed the leader of the country. Not Mr. Calhoun only, but Mr. Webster and Mr. Clay were dead; a new generation was on the stage, and its leader, while parties changed, was Stephen A. Douglas, since 1847 one of the senators

from Illinois. No man better fitted for confident and aggressive leadership in an age of doubt and confusion could have been found, even in the western country from which he came. He was but forty-one, but had won every step of his way for himself since he came a lad out of Vermont, and knew how to work his will with men and circumstances. His appearance bespoke what he was. He was short of stature, but gave the impression of mass and extraordinary vigor, carrying his square, firmly set head with its mass of dark hair with an alert poise that gave their right bearing to his deep-set eyes and mouth of determined line. His friends dubbed him the Little Giant, with affectionate familiarity; and his opponents found in him a candor that matched his fearlessness, a daring and readiness of wit that were the more formidable in contests before the people because he was a bit coarse-fibred and could be counted on to hold his own in any sort of debate. He had in a certain sense taken Mr. Benton's place in the Senate. His chief interest was in the development of the western country, the new communities constantly making to the westward, which were like the Illinois of his own youth, and carried so much of the vigor and initiative of American life; and he had by natural selection become chairman of the Senate's Committee on Territories. West of Iowa and Missouri stretched the great Platte country all the way to the Rockies, and across it ran the trails which were the highways into the far West. The western Indians had their hunting grounds there upon the plains, and the authorities at Washington had once and again thought of allotting to them an extensive reservation which should secure them in their hunting privileges. Mr. Douglas feared that something of that kind might throw a barrier across the main lines of the westward movement which he watched with such sympathy and interest, and had more than once urged the erection of a territory in the Platte country. In 1854 he had had his

will, and had quickened the approach of revolution by the way in which he chose to have it.

His measure, as finally submitted to the Senate, provided for the creation of two territories, one lying immediately to the west of Missouri and to be known as Kansas, and the other, to be known as Nebraska, stretching northward upon the great plains through which the Platte found its way to the Missouri. Both lay north of the southern boundary of Missouri extended, the historic line of the Missouri Compromise, established now these thirty-three years, but Mr. Douglas declared himself impelled by "a proper sense of patriotic duty" to set that compromise aside and to act upon the principle of the later compromise of 1850, legislation which had been framed but the other day to compose the agitation of parties. The bill which he introduced, therefore, explicitly declared the Missouri Compromise "inoperative and void," and left the matter of the extension of slavery into the new territories entirely to the sovereign choice of the people who should occupy them.

Mr. Douglas did not wish to see slavery extended; he was simply taking what seemed to him the straightest way to the settlement of a vexed question which apparently could be settled in no other way. He did not expect the settlers of the new country to accept or desire slavery; he expected them to reject it. But whether they accepted it or rejected it, he thought them the best judges of such a question, affecting their own life and social makeup; and he did not believe that in any case Congress could either successfully or constitutionally determine such a matter beforehand. There were men in the Senate who earnestly opposed what he sought to do: Seward, and Sumner, and Chase, and Fish, and Foote, and Wade were there, the representatives of a new party which had devoted itself to this very task of blocking the extension of slavery; but they did not avail against the confident Democratic majority, which

seemed to find a certain exhilaration in having obtained at last a leader who did not propose compromises but was willing to venture the open contests which only actual settlement and the direct action of the people themselves could conclude. It seemed clearly Democratic doctrine, this doctrine of "squatter sovereignty," and they accepted it with a certain zest and sense as of relief.

They must have seen how direct a challenge it was to the rival interests, pro-slavery and anti-slavery, to attempt a conquest of the new territories. Not that there was any question about Nebraska. That lay too far north to be available for the extension into it of the southern system. But that system had got its established foothold already in Missouri, and Kansas lay close neighbor to slave territory within the same parallels of latitude; and so far as her lands were concerned the challenge was accepted, — accepted in a way that held the attention of the whole country. It was a very tragic thing that ensued. Settlers out of the slave-owning states just at hand were naturally the first to enter the new territory, taking their slaves with them; but there presently began a movement of settlers out of the North which was of no ordinary kind. Nothing could have stimulated active opposition to the extension of slavery more than what Mr. Douglas had done. He had notified the country that law was neither here nor there in such a matter; that there was no legislative body that had the authority to say beforehand whether slaves could go with the settlers who entered the new lands of the national domain or not; that the predominance of men who wished slavery or did not wish it — their predominance, not in the nation, but in the territories themselves — must determine the question. In brief, he had made it a question of numbers, a question of conquest, of prevailing majorities on the one side or the other. Kansas therefore began to be peopled as no other territory had been. Settlers were sent there by organized effort. Individ-

uals and societies in the North set themselves to work to find the men and the means to take possession of it, and the new settlers came prepared for anything that might prove to be necessary to establish themselves or their principles in the new territory, whether legal or illegal, understanding that it was not to be a process of law but an act of choice made in any form of fact. It was an opportunity for desperate men, as well as for peaceful immigrants who wanted homes and came to till the broad, level acres of the prairie; and desperate men availed themselves of it. Kansas became a veritable battlefield. Men stopped at no violence to prevail, and flames of partisan warfare burst forth there which threatened, as every one saw, to spread to the whole Union.

Mr. Douglas's principles were put to the test the very year Mr. Buchanan became President. Until that year the pro-slavery men who had come out of Missouri and the farther South had predominated in numbers in Kansas, and had pressed their advantage with characteristic energy and initiative. Before they had lost their majority by the pouring in of settlers coming faster and faster out of the North, they had called a constitutional convention, and had submitted to the people of the territory an instrument which established slavery by organic law. One of the first things it fell to Mr. Buchanan to do was to submit to Congress their application for admission to the Union as a state under that instrument. But Mr. Douglas would not vote to accept the new state on those terms, and there were men enough of his opinion in the Democratic ranks to exclude it. He knew that, even at the time the constitution which was submitted with the application was in process of being drawn and submitted, the weight of opinion in the territory had shifted, and that when the popular vote upon it was taken the majority of the voters of the territory were against it. Multitudes had refrained from voting upon the question of its acceptance at all, because they had

felt that they were being tricked. The instrument was not submitted to them to be accepted or rejected, but to be accepted "with slavery" or "without slavery," — all other provisions contained in it in any case to go into effect; and it was clear from the text of it that to vote for it "without slavery" would not in fact exclude slavery; because clauses which were quite independent of the organic provision in question threw effective safeguards about the ownership of slaves, which would in all probability in any case indirectly secure it. This was not "squatter sovereignty." Whatever might be said of Mr. Douglas's doctrine, he held it candidly and in all sincerity, and would not consent to deal falsely with it; and at the certain risk of losing the confidence of the southern wing of his party, now its chief and controlling wing, he voted against the admission of Kansas under a pro-slavery constitution, notwithstanding the fact that the President backed it with his recognition as, in form at any rate, the legally expressed wish of the people of the territory.

And so things stood in the year 1857, a very doubtful face upon them, — a vast deal undone that had seemed at least to give definite form and security to the movements of politics, and nothing done by way of new definition or settlement. And then, as if to complete the confusion and destroy even Mr. Douglas's principle of action, came the Dred Scott decision, and the country learned that in the opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States the people of a territory had no more right than Congress to forbid the holding of slaves as chattels within their boundaries. Dred Scott was a negro of Missouri, whose master had taken him first into one of the States from which slavery was excluded by local law, and then into one of the territories from which slavery had been excluded by the congressional legislation of 1820, the famous Missouri Compromise. After his return to Missouri and the death of his master, Scott sought to obtain his freedom on the

ground that his temporary residence on free soil had operated to annul his master's rights over him. The court not only decided against him: it went much farther and undertook a systematic exposition of its opinion with regard to the legal status of slavery in national politics. It declared that in its opinion slaves were not citizens within the meaning of the Constitution of the United States, but property, and that neither Congress nor the legislature of a territory — the power of a territorial government being only the power of Congress delegated — could legislate with hostile intent against any species of property belonging to citizens of the United States; that the compromise legislation of 1820 had been *ultra vires* and had no legal effect; and that under our constitutional allotment of powers only states could make valid laws concerning property, whether in slaves or in anything else. The repeal of the compromise measures of 1820 by Mr. Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854 had not been necessary. They had been legally null from the first. The Dred Scott decision was uttered two days after Mr. Buchanan's inauguration.

As if there were not grounds enough of uneasiness, financial distress was added, — not because of the political fears and disquietude of the time, though they no doubt played their part in disturbing the minds of men of business and clouding their calculations of the future, — but because of the operation of forces familiar enough in financial history. An era of extraordinary enterprise had followed the rapid extension of railways and the successful establishment of steam navigation on the seas, and the discovery of gold in California had added excitement to enterprise when stimulation was not necessary and excitement was very dangerous. It was hard at best to give solidity and prudent limit to industrial and commercial undertakings which sought to keep pace with the growth of a new nation, to follow a people constantly moving everywhere into new lands, spreading their

thin and scattered settlements far and near upon the practically unlimited spaces of a great continent. It was a speculative process in any case, based upon necessarily uncertain calculations as to the movement of population and the development of industry. The very railways which facilitated enterprise were themselves hazardous pieces of business, and had been pushed so fast and far through sparsely settled districts as to give those who invested in them scant return for their money, when they gave them any return at all and did not prove utter financial failures, so far as those were concerned who met their first cost. The speculative element in business, necessarily present everywhere, had grown larger and larger until, added to mere waste and bad management and flat dishonesty, there had come an inevitable crash of credit, and in the reaction business was prostrated. The crisis came in the winter which followed the presidential election of 1856, and Mr. Buchanan's term of office began when its effects were freshest and most depressing. It did not wear the features of panic, after the first crash had come, so much as of mere lethargy. Enterprise was at a standstill: the face of all business was dead; men not only did not venture, they did not hope: they were stunned, and the spirit taken out of them.

It was one of the significant signs of the times that no particular political importance was attributed to these financial disturbances. No one sought to make political capital of them. No doubt the uneasiness of the time, the removal of old political foundations by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, the apparent transformation of the process of settlement into a process of civil war in Kansas, the rising passion of conviction that the contest of parties upon the question of slavery must presently come to some hot issue, contributed to confirm merchants and manufacturers and bankers and transportation companies in the opinion that nothing was safe that depended upon calculations of future advantage; but

such matters lay apart from what politicians were chiefly thinking of, seemed to belong among the ordinary interests of the country's every-day life, and not among the extraordinary interests they were called on to handle, interests that loomed bigger and more ominous the more closely they were approached, the more intimately they were dealt with. Nothing financial was for the time being of party significance or interest. It was even possible to revise the tariff without party contest, in the interest of business instead of in the interest of politicians. It seemed to men of all parties that the tariff as it stood contributed to the financial distress of the time. It was steadily drawing into the Treasury a surplus of funds which the government did not use and which it was at that time especially inconvenient to withdraw from circulation. It was agreed, therefore, to put many of the raw materials of manufacture, hitherto taxed, on the free list, and to reduce the general level of duties to twenty-four per cent. Not since the War of 1812 had it been possible to arrange such a matter so amicably, with so little debate, with such immediate concert of action. The interest of parties was evidently withdrawn to other things.

These friendly debates, Mr. Buchanan's decisive majority in the electoral college, and the apparent dispersion of all organized elements of opposition, might give to the year 1857, as we look back to it, a deceptive air of peace. Even the radical views of the Supreme Court in deciding the Dred Scott case, and the uncomfortable matter of determining the right of Kansas to enter the Union with a pro-slavery constitution, might be made to look like the end of a process of change rather than the beginning of things still more radical and doubtful of issue, if one were seeking signs of accommodation and were satisfied to look no deeper than the surface. Undoubtedly 1857 was a year of pause, when the strains of politics were for the moment eased. It seemed a year of peace and settled policy.

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It was in fact, however, the pause which precedes concerted and decisive movements of opinion upon matters too critical to form the ordinary subjects of party contest. Parties will join issue as hotly as you please upon any ordinary question of the nation's life, even though the elements of that question cut perilously deep into individual interests and involve radical economic or political changes; but they waver, postpone, and evade when they come within sight of questions which cut as deep and swing through as wide a compass as did that which divided North and South, and seemed to involve the very character and perpetuation of the Union of the States. The Democratic party had held a steady enough course upon the question of slavery. No doubt it was the easier course to maintain, — the course which seemed only a fulfillment of the older understandings of our constitutional system, only a working out of the policy of the country on lines long established and, it might be, inevitable. No doubt, too, the definite principles and undeviating purposes of the Southern men who constituted so important an element of the strength of the party, and who furnished from the ranks of their politicians so many men who had the capacity and the desire to lead, gave the party a leadership and a motive for framing definite programmes which the party of opposition lacked; and in a time of vacillation and doubt the confident party, with a mind of its own, has always the advantage. But, for whatever reason, the Democrats had so far remained for the most part of one mind and purpose, and other parties had gone to pieces. Only within the year had it begun to look as if a party ready to face the Democrats with resolute purpose and determined programme would at last form. The Whig party had finally gone to pieces in the presidential campaign of 1852. It had never been a party to declare its principles very strongly at critical moments or to espouse a cause very definitely in a time of doubt. It had had splendid

leaders. The annals of the country have been made illustrious by few greater names than those of Webster and Clay, and their steadfast endeavor to keep the government to clear lines of thoughtful policy it must ever be the pleasure of the historian to praise; but the party had too often gone into presidential campaigns depending upon some mere popular cry, some passing enthusiasm of the people for a particular hero. The only Whig Presidents had been successful soldiers, General Harrison and General Taylor, both of whom died in office, to be succeeded, the one by Mr. Tyler who was not a Whig but a Democrat, the other by Mr. Fillmore who followed the leaders of his party, and counted for little in the formation of policies. Mr. Clay himself had shifted very uneasily from Yes to No in 1844 on the question of the annexation of Texas, when pitted against Mr. Polk, and the confident programme of the Democrats for "the reoccupation of Oregon and the reannexation of Texas," to the great loss of personal prestige; and the "Liberty Party" which then drew discontented Whigs from Mr. Clay's following had found successors in parties which showed more and more powerful as the number of voters grew who found the Whigs without courage or purpose on the chief issue of the day.

It was easy, with the machinery of nominating conventions open to everybody's use, as it had been since General Jackson's day, to bring new parties into the field from season to season, though it was by no means so easy to give them strength and coherency amidst shifting opinion; and independent nominations had more than once diverted votes from the ruling party at critical moments. There was little doubt but that the sixty thousand votes cast for the candidate of the Liberty Party in 1844 had been chiefly drawn from the Whig ranks, and had cost Mr. Clay the election. In 1848 a "Free-Soil" convention had nominated Mr. Van Buren, and a strong faction of Democrats in New York, displeased with

the attitude of their party on the question of slavery in the Mexican cession, had followed their example, with the result that the Whig candidate won and the Democrat lost. The opposition to the extension of slavery was strongest among men of Whig connections, but it showed itself also in the Democratic ranks and rendered party calculations most uncertain. Mr. Wilmot, whose proviso against slavery had made such difficulty in the debates on the Mexican cession, was a Democrat, not a Whig, not a professed partisan of the new men of Mr. Seward's creed, who were slowly making their way into Congress. The Free-Soil men held another convention in 1852, when the Whigs went to pieces, and spoke to the country with a ringing platform of "no slave states, no more slave territories, no nationalized slavery, no national legislation for the extradition of slaves," and again made their own nomination for the presidency; but opinion was shifting again; the Compromise of 1850 had disposed voters for the time to let critical matters alone; restless men were turning in other directions, and the Free-Soilers reaped no apparent advantage from the break-up of parties. It was not until Mr. Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and the pitiful spectacle of the struggle in Kansas which followed, had drawn men sharply from thought to action, that the Republican party emerged and showed the strength of a party that would last and win its way to power; and even then it felt obliged to compound a singular Free-Soil-Anti-Nebraska-Whig creed and nominate a Democrat for the presidency.

Meantime there had been witnessed an extraordinary diversion in the field of parties. The Know-Nothing party had sprung into sudden importance, with a programme which had nothing to say of slavery one way or the other, but concentrated attention upon the formidable tide of foreigners pouring into the country, because of the famine in Ireland and the political upheavals of 1848 in Europe, and urged upon the country the necessity

of safeguarding its institutions against alien influences, of confining its gifts of political office to native Americans, and of regulating very circumspectly the bestowal of the suffrage. Voters turned to this new party as if glad to find some new current for their thoughts, some new interest touched at least with a common patriotism. In the autumn of 1854 the Know-Nothings elected their candidates for the governorship in Massachusetts and Delaware, and sent nearly a hundred members to the House of Representatives. In the autumn of 1855 they carried New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Kentucky, and California, and fell but little short of winning majorities in six of the Southern States. The House of Representatives which met in December, 1855, was an extraordinary medley of Democrats, Anti-Nebraska men, Free-Soilers, southern pro-slavery Whigs, northern anti-slavery Whigs, Know-Nothings who favored the extension of slavery, and Know-Nothings who opposed it. Nothing was certain of that assembly except that the Democrats had lost their majority in it. Even in 1856, when the elements of opposition began to draw together into the Republican party, there were still in the field a remnant of Whigs and a remnant of Know-Nothings. The four years of another administration were needed for the final formation of parties as they were to enter the conclusive contest of 1860. And so the year 1857 was a year between-times, when the country had not yet consciously drawn away from its past, had not yet consciously entered its revolutionary future.

It was indeed a revolution which ensued. Changes more complete, more pervasive and radical than those which were wrought by the war between the States, by the "Reconstruction" of the southern States, and by all that has followed of social and economic transformation, could hardly be imagined. The nation of 1907 is hardly recognizable, socially, politically, or economically, as the nation of 1857

or of 1860. The generation that wrought that extraordinary revolution left the stage but yesterday. We have all known and familiarly conversed with men who belonged to it and who performed its tremendous tasks. Some of the soldiers who officered the armies of that war of transformation are still among us. But we do not think their thoughts; it requires an effort of the imagination to carry our minds back to the things which are for them the most vital facts and recollections of their lives. Even they are now unconsciously dominated by influences which have lost all flavor of the days they remember. They have come to think our thoughts and see the world as we see it: a nation not made apparently by the forces they handled, but by forces new and of a modern world, — by vast economic alterations and unforeseen growths of enterprise and endeavor; by the opening up of the Orient and the new stir of affairs upon the Pacific; by an unlooked-for war which has drawn us out of our one-time domestic self-absorption into the doubtful and perilous field of international politics; by new influences of opinion and new problems of political organization and of legal regulation. Nothing remains of that older day but the irreparable mischief wrought by the reconstruction of the southern States. That folly has left upon us the burden of a race problem well-nigh insoluble, which even the alchemy of these extraordinary fifty years has not transmuted into stuff of calculable human purpose. That is of the old world; all else is of the new. We see what has gone by only across a gulf of unfamiliar things.

And so we stand in the year 1907 as if in a new age, and look not back but forward. It would perhaps be too fanciful to pretend to find in 1907 a close parallel of circumstances with the far year 1857, which lies so long a half century away from us; but there is this particular feature of resemblance, that this, like that, is a brief season between times, when

forces are gathering which we have not clearly analyzed, and tasks are to be performed for which we have not formed definite party combinations. Parties are in partial solution now as then, and for the same reason. The issue of the day is clearly enough defined in our thoughts, as was the issue with regard to the extension of slavery in the thought of all observant men in 1857; but parties have not yet squarely aligned themselves along what must of course be the line of cleavage. It is manifest that we must adjust our legal and political principles to a new set of conditions which involve the whole moral and economic make-up of our national life; but party platforms are not yet clearly differentiated, party programmes are not yet explicit for the voter's choice. Let us hope that we are on the eve of a campaign of sharp definition.

There are many things to define, and yet there is only one thing. It is easy enough to point out the perplexing complexity of our present field of choice in every matter that calls for action. Our new business organization is so different from our old, to which we had adjusted our morals and our economic analyses, that we find ourselves confused when we try to think out its problems. Everything is upon a gigantic scale. The individual is lost in the organization. No man any longer, it would seem, understands the whole of any modern business. Every part of every undertaking demands special knowledge and expert skill. Individuals play their parts in subordination to the organizations which they serve, and we are made to doubt their moral responsibility beyond the limits of the mere tasks they are set to do; and yet the morality of the machine itself we do not know how to formulate. If we cannot formulate its morals, we cannot formulate the legal principles upon which we are to deal with it; for law is only so much of the moral understandings of society, so much of its rules of right and of convenience as it has been possible to reduce to principles

plainly suitable for general application without too much doubt or refinement. Our thinkers, whether in the field of morals or in the field of economics, have before them nothing less than the task of translating law and morals into the terms of modern business; and inasmuch as morals cannot be corporate, but must be individual, however ingeniously the individual may seek covert, that task in simple terms comes to this: to find the individual amidst modern circumstances and bring him face to face once more with a clearly defined personal responsibility.

And that is the one thing which the politician, as well as the moralist and the economist, must make up his mind about. It is easy to state the matter in a way that makes it sound very subtle, very philosophical, a thing for the casuist, not for the man of affairs. But it is a plain question for practical men after all. And practical men are very busy just now, in confused and haphazard ways, perhaps, but very energetically, nevertheless, in settling it for better or for worse. We state our problem for statesmen by saying that it is the problem of the control of corporations. Corporations are, of course, only combinations of individuals, but the individuals combined in them have a power in their respective fields, an opportunity of enterprise, which is beyond all precedent in private undertakings and which gives them a sort of public character, if only by reason of their size and scope and the enormous resources they command; some of them seeming, if it were possible, rivals of the government itself in their control over individuals and affairs. Lawyers have always spoken of corporations as artificial persons, but these modern corporations seem in the popular imagination and in the minds of law-makers to be actual persons, the colossal personalities of modern industrial society.

One school of politicians amongst us, one school of lawyers and of law-makers, accepts the prodigy as literal fact, and

tries to deal with it as with a person. It is a new doctrine of "squatter sovereignty." Mr. Douglas maintained that those who formed the great corporate bodies of the West which we have called territories could not by any rightful legal principle be dealt with as citizens, but must be suffered corporately to form their lives and practices as they pleased, and then dealt with as states; his modern counterparts tell us that corporations must contrive their ways of business at their pleasure and peril, and that law cannot deal with them as a body of citizens but only as an organized power to be regulated in its entirety and handled as a corporate member of our new national society of corporations. Corporations, we are told, have grown bigger than States, and must take a sort of precedence of them in the new organism of our law, being made participants in a federal system of legal regulation which States cannot negative or tamper with. The only way in which to meet such amazing — I had almost said amusing — ideas, is to meet them as the older doctrine of squatter sovereignty was met: by a flat denial that there is or can be any such thing as corporate morality or a corporate privilege and standing which is lifted out of the realm of ordinary citizenship and individual responsibility. The whole theory is compounded of confused thinking and impossible principles of law; and the political party that explicitly rejects it and substitutes for it plain sense and feasible law will bring health and the exhilaration of comprehensible policy into affairs again.

The present apparent approach of the two great parties of the nation to one another, their apparent agreement upon the chief questions now of significance, is not real, it is only apparent. At any rate it is plain that if it is in fact taking place, it does not truly represent the two great bodies of opinion that exist in the nation. There is a great and apparently growing body of opinion in the country which approves of a radical change in the character of our institutions and the ob-

jects of our law, which wishes to see government, and the federal government at that, regulate business. Some men who entertain this wish perceive that it is socialistic, some do not. But of course it is socialistic. Government cannot properly or intelligently regulate business without fully comprehending it in its details as well as in its larger aspects; it cannot comprehend it except through the instrumentality of expert commissions; it cannot use expert commissions long for purposes of regulation without itself by degrees undertaking actually to order and conduct what it began by regulating. We are at present on the high road to government ownership of many sorts, or to some other method of control which will in practice be as complete as actual ownership.

On the other hand, there is a great body of opinion, slow to express itself, sorely perplexed in the presence of modern business conditions, but very powerful and upon the eve of an uprising, which prefers the older and simpler methods of the law, prefers courts to commissions, and believes them, if properly used and adapted, better, more efficacious, in the end more purifying, than the new instrumentalities now being so unthinkingly elaborated. The country is still full of men who retain a deep enthusiasm for the old ideals of individual liberty, sobered and kept within bounds by the equally old definitions of personal responsibility, the ancient safeguards against license; and these men are right in believing that those older principles can be so used as to control modern business and keep government outside the pale of industrial enterprise. The law can deal with transactions instead of with methods of business, and with individuals instead of with corporations. It can reverse the process which creates corporations, and instead of compounding individuals, oblige corporations to analyze their organization and name the individuals responsible for each class of their transactions. The law, both civil

and criminal, can clearly enough characterize transactions, can clearly enough determine what their consequences shall be to the individuals who engage in them in a responsible capacity. New definitions in that field are not beyond the knowledge of modern lawyers or the skill of modern law-makers, if they will accept the advice of disinterested lawyers. We shall never moralize society by fining or even dissolving corporations; we shall only inconvenience it. We shall moralize it only when we make up our minds as to what transactions are reprehensible, and bring those transactions home to individuals with the full penalties of the law. That is the other, the greater body of opinion; one or other of the great parties of the nation must sooner or later stand with it, while the other stands with

those who burden government with the regulation of business by direct oversight.

Such a season between times as this in which we live demands nothing so imperatively as clear thinking and definite conviction: thinking clear both in its objects and in its details; conviction which can be satisfied only by action. The *Atlantic Monthly* has enjoyed the great distinction of supplying the writing of conviction throughout the deep troubles and perplexities of a half-century of contest and reconstruction; it enters now upon a second half-century which is no less in need of similar tonic. Our very political ideals are now to be decided. We are to keep or lose our place of distinction among the nations, by keeping or losing our faith in the practicability of individual liberty.

ATLANTIC DINNERS AND DINERS

BY ARTHUR GILMAN

THE *Atlantic* dinners to which I purpose giving attention date back, the last of them, twenty-five years, for since June, 1882, though there have doubtless been as many dinners as diners, none have occurred that demand public investigation. The now ancient magazine was sweet sixteen when I began to ask of some of the first diners the nature of the dinners that I had heard of their taking together in Cambridge. Mr. Lowell was living, and Dr. Holmes, as well as others who were present at the birth. Cambridge seemed to be the place appropriate for such festivals, for an examination of the catalogue of *Atlantic* writers will show a large minority, at least, of names associated with Harvard, although, in the process of time, and owing to the widening of the scope of the magazine, the whole world is now laid under obligation to supply the demand; in spite, also, of

the fact that it was the original intention to give a somewhat international character to the venture, and that the first number opened with an article by an Englishman on an English subject.

Reference to the *Atlantic* dinners will be found in the first number of the magazine. Mr. Lowell made it himself. "It was said long ago," he writes, "that poets, like canaries, must be starved in order to keep them in good voice, and in the palmy days of Grub Street, an editor's table was nothing grander than his own knee, on which, in his airy garret, he unrolled his paper parcel of dinner, happy if its wrapping were a sheet from Brown's last poem and not his own. Now an editorial table seems to mean a board of green cloth, at which literary broken victuals are served out with no carving but that of the editorial scissors. La Maga has her table, too, and at fitting

times invites to it her various Eminent Hands. It is a round table — that is, rounded by the principle of rotation — for how could she settle points of precedence with the august heads of her various departments without danger of the dinner's growing cold? Substantial dinners are eaten thereat with Homeric appetite. . . . At these feasts no tyranny of speechmaking is allowed, but the bon-bons are all wrapped in original copies of verses made by various contributors, which, having served their festive turn, become the property of the guests. Reporters are not admitted, for the eating is not done for inspection like that of the hapless inmates of a menagerie."

We are permitted to go a little farther back than Mr. Lowell, in his modesty, allowed himself to go, for before the *Atlantic* was begun, before any one knew that it was to be, there was a notable dinner, given by the publishers, at the new hotel of Harvey D. Parker on School Street, in Boston. It is not necessary for a sound institution that it should begin with a constitution and by-laws, and a good dinner seems to serve as a basis for permanence! At any rate, the publishing house under the auspices of which the *Atlantic* began, thought that a dinner was well!

Who were present on this occasion, for which we should be so grateful? A dozen literary gentlemen had been asked to come, and at the head of the table, as we should have read in the *Boston Advertiser* the following morning, had reporters been admitted, sat Mr. Phillips, of the publishing firm. At the foot was Mr. Underwood, "literary adviser," who had pressed the matter to a fruitful issue. Mr. Longfellow, then fifty years of age, Dr. Holmes, two years younger, the historian Motley, five years younger, Mr. Lowell, only thirty-eight, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and John Eliot Cabot were there. Pretty good names to conjure with! Mr. Underwood told me that Harriet Beecher Stowe was the person whose urgency had effectually influenced Mr. Phillips, but

neither she nor any other lady was present at this initial dinner.

We know that after the dinner came to an end, there was serious discussion of the establishment of an "organ" — perhaps that business word was used — worthy of Boston's reputation. Had not New York boasted its genial *Knickerbocker*, its worthy *Harper's*, in whose Easy Chair Boston's Curtis long afterwards sat, and *Putnam's*, with a growing reputation well sustained? Boston had long sustained its *North American Review*, which had absorbed Tudor's *Monthly Anthology*; and there had been a succession of *Polyanthuses*, and *Ordeals*, and *Monthly Chronicles*, and there was once upon a time *The Dial*, with Mr. Emerson, Mr. Alcott, and Margaret Fuller at the helm. Mr. Lowell, Edward Everett Hale, W. W. Story, and E. P. Whipple had found place for their literary "output" in the *Boston Miscellany*, a magazine about the size of *Harper's*, with a dark and repellent chocolate cover. Bunker Hill monument was roughly depicted on it, and in the foreground was a comfortably dressed Cupid who had just thrown aside his bow and arrows, while his young eyes gazed curious at the obelisk, the meaning of which he seemed unable to guess. Lowell had himself edited, with Robert Carter, *The Pioneer*; and Charles Hale had tried to establish a literary journal entitled *Today*, five years before the *Atlantic* began; but none of these satisfied Boston, and so this dinner and this discussion.

Unexpectedly to himself, Mr. Lowell was now nominated as editor of the magazine to be, but he accepted the responsibility, with several provisos. He demanded that Dr. Holmes should contribute, that George Nichols, of Cambridge, should read proofs — and that did not mean what is usually meant when proof-reading is spoken of, for Nichols, publisher of Lowell's early poems, careful successor of Charles Folsom, could correct authors who misquoted authorities or fell into any other inaccuracy. Mr.

Lowell meant to secure vivacity and correctness. Next he asked that Longfellow, Motley, Emerson, Whittier, and others whose names "blazon our provincial scroll," as Holmes says, should support him, and this, of course, meant that the publishers should support *them*! Thus the first dinner ended in complete harmony, and a nameless magazine was ensured.

The magazine was nameless, though Mr. Emerson thought it might be called *Town and Country*, and other titles had been suggested, but none proved at once satisfactory. Dr. Holmes told me that one day, after he had retired to "his virtuous couch," he suddenly roused himself and exclaimed to his wife, "I have it! It shall be called *The Atlantic Monthly Magazine*! Soon you'll hear the boys crying through the streets, 'Here's your *Atlantic*, '*tlantic*, '*tlantic*, '*tlantic*.'" *Atlantic* it became, but the publishers dropped the word magazine, and were sufficiently upbraided by the word-mongers for their stupidity in making a noun of an adjective, although "monthly" had been used in England, perhaps for a hundred years, in the same way.

After the magazine had been launched, after the critics had exhausted themselves in discussing Emerson's "Brahma," which appeared in the first number, some of the contributors conceived the idea of dining by themselves, with no publisher in the room. They chose for the purpose Porter's Tavern, in Cambridge, situated not too far from Harvard Square and the College, — a suitable walk for a literary man before or after dinner. It was a place that Mr. Lowell once told me was the best in the world for a good dinner, and Dr. Holmes assured me that if Lowell thought it the best place it certainly was, "for," he added, "Lowell knows." The third number had just appeared. It was towards the end of December, 1857. Mr. Emerson was present. He was older than the others, being fifty-four.

It would not do to give imagination

play, and picture to ourselves the scene and the flow of wit. Dr. Holmes gives us the only light on the subject that I know of. With his help we may, indeed, imagine the scene and listen to the conversation. The avenue on which Porter's Tavern was situated runs from Harvard Square to Lexington, and at the time was called "North," in respect to the direction that it took when it left the vicinity of the College. It has since been greatly lengthened, and out of respect to the state is called Massachusetts. The evenings in December are cool, and a slight fall of snow whitened the sidewalk as the diners sat around the table. Mr. Porter was in attendance, a slight man, one of the old-time hosts who used to cut the joint themselves, stand behind the chairs of the guests, and ask them if the game was rightly cooked. He had culinary wisdom, and delighted in expressing it in aphorisms. He was accustomed to tell his guests that game to be properly cooked should be carried slowly through a warm kitchen, and when asked what was the best part of a goose after the breast, he replied, "You may as well give the rest to the poor."

There was lively conversation at this dinner. Doubtless there was game on the table, and there may have been some sort of spirituous liquor, for Cambridge was not at that date a no-license city. The following year the Autocrat made some remarks on the subject of temperance that seem to bear on his experience that December evening. "I believe in temperance," he said, "nay, almost in abstinence, as a rule for healthy people. I trust I practice both. But let me tell you, there are companies of men of genius in which I sometimes go where the atmosphere of intellect and sentiment is so much more stimulating than alcohol that if I thought fit to take wine, it would be to keep me sober." Dr. Holmes recollected that particular dinner so well that he testified years afterwards that some of the tracks made in the snow on the way to Harvard Square late that evening were

not in lines that the mathematical professor at Harvard would have called straight. The conclusion is forced upon us that there was no wine on the table, and that the essence of intellect and sentiment was very potent.

Later still, in 1883, Dr. Holmes reported something of the dinners at Porter's in verse, reading it in New York before a collection of physicians, and taking advantage of the poet's license to vary his previous account slightly, and to throw the burden of divulging the secrets of the banqueting hall upon "some reporting spy," forgetting that Mr. Lowell had emphatically asserted that reporters were never present.

What Landlord Porter — rest his soul! — once said.

A feast it was that none might scorn to share;
Cambridge and Concord's demi-gods were there —

"And who were they?" You know as well as I.

The stars long glittering in our eastern sky —
The names that blazon our provincial scroll
Ring round the world with Briton's drumbeat roll!

Good was the dinner, better was the talk;
Some whispered, devious was the homeward walk;

The story came from some reporting spy —
They lie, those fellows — O how they *do* lie!
Not ours those footsteps in the new fallen snow —

Poets and sages never zigzagged so!

Now Landlord Porter — grave, concise, severe,

Master, nay, monarch in his proper sphere,
Though to belles-lettres he pretended not —
Lived close to Harvard, so knew what was what;

And, having bards, philosophers and such
To eat his dinner, put the finest touch
His art could reach those learned mouths to fill

With the best fruits of gustatory skill;
And, finding wisdom plenty at his board —
Wit, science, learning — all his guests had stored,

By way of contrast, ventured to produce,
To please their palates, an inviting goose.
Better it were the company should starve

Than hands unskilled that goose attempt to carve;
None but the master artist shall assail
The bird that turns the mightiest surgeon pale.

One voice arises from the banquet hall.
The landlord answers to the pleading call;
Of stature tall, sublime of port he stands,
His blade and bident gleaming in his hands;
Beneath his glance the strong-knit joints relax
As the weak knees before the headsman's axe.

And Landlord Porter lifts his glittering knife
As some stout warrior armed for bloody strife;
All eyes are on him; some in whispers ask,
What man is he who dares this dangerous task?
When lo! the triumph of consummate art,
With scarce a touch the creature drops apart!
As when the baby in his nurse's lap
Spills on the carpet a dissected map.

Then the calm sage, the monarch of the lyre,
Critics and men of science all admire,
And one whose wisdom I will not impeach,
Lively, not churlish, somewhat free of speech,
Speaks thus: "Say, master, what of worth is left

In birds like this, of breast and legs bereft?"
And Landlord Porter, with uplifted eyes,
Smiles on the simple querist, and replies:
"When from a goose you've taken legs and breast,

Wipe lips, thank God and leave the poor the rest!"

A particular article in the number of the *Atlantic* under discussion impressed Dr. Holmes and some of the other diners. It was entitled Mamoul (Usage), and was discussed as the party walked towards Harvard Square. It was by Dr. J. W. Palmer, who wrote about Indian subjects at the time in an original style. Some of the men were heard to murmur in quotation, —

This is a Rajah!
Putterum!
Very small rajah!
Putterum!
Sixpenny rajah!
Putterum!
Holes in his elbows!
Putterum!

The article described a scene in Calcutta, opening in a street called Cossitollah, and exhibited in a lively way the habits of impudent bearers of palkees, who, in

this case, thought when they started that they were carrying a "sixpenny rajah," but who concluded before "they turned down Flagg Street," that they had made a grievous mistake in their estimate. Their tune changed suddenly and they went on crying "Jeldie jou, jeldie!" (that is, trot up smartly), —

He is a Rajah!
 Putterum.
 Rich little Rajah!
 Putterum.
 Fierce little Rajah!
 Putterum.
 See how his eyes flash!
 Putterum.
 Hear how his voice roars!
 Putterum.
 He is a Tippoo!
 Putterum.
 Capitan Tippoo!
 Putterum.
 Tremble before him!
 Putterum.

The earliest of the *Atlantic* dinners were brought about by invitation of the publishers. The next, as we have seen, were eaten without the presence of their "natural enemies," by the contributors alone.¹

When the magazine was sixteen years of age, it passed into the hands of its present owners, and the fact was emphasized a little later by another dinner at Parker's, to which a few of the contributors were invited by the publishers. Again it was just as the number for January had appeared, — it was rather early in those days, — and December 15, 1874, was the date. Again, too, there were no reporters present; but the press heard of it notwithstanding, for George P. Lathrop, at one time assistant to Mr. Howells in editorial work, wrote an account of it for the *New*

¹ Readers of Colonel Higginson's *Cheerful Yesterdays* will recall his vivacious description (pp. 178-180) of the *Atlantic* dinner at the Revere House, July 9, 1859, at which Mrs. Stowe and Miss Harriet Prescott (now Mrs. Spofford) were the guests of honor. Longfellow's *Journal* mentions that "Mrs. Stowe was there with a green wreath on her head, which I thought very becoming.

York Evening Post, and there were other journals that mentioned it. We were twenty-eight as we sat at table, at the ends of which sat Mr. Houghton and Mr. Howells. Of the company, fifteen, more than one-half, are now gone. Among them are Aldrich, Cranch, George E. Waring, E. P. Whipple, James Freeman Clarke, Dr. Holmes, Mr. Houghton himself, and the Reverend William M. Baker, author of *Mose Evans*, a novel pretty well known at the time. The dinner was a good one, of course, and the speeches also were good. There were notable absentees — Longfellow, Whittier, and Emerson, of former dinners, Bryant and Stedman and John Hay, who had been invited to represent New York and parts adjacent, who would have come had they been able. Reminiscences were in order, and Dr. Holmes was asked to tell of the days when Porter's Tavern was the dining-place. After saying that he was greatly "embarrassed" by being called up, Dr. Holmes made brief reference to Porter's and then drew forth a manuscript which, he said, would serve as a breast-work from behind which he could speak. The poem seemed to be a *tour de force* in the use of uncommon rhymes. Here are a few of them: —

I suppose it's myself that you're making allusion to,
 And bringing the sense of dismay and confusion to.
 I'm up for a — something — and since I've begun with it,
 I must give you a toast before I have done with it.
 Let me pump at my wits as they pumped the Cochinatate
 That moistened — it may be — the very last bit you ate.
 As for thoughts, — never mind — take the ones that lie uppermost,
 And the rhymes used by Milton and Byron and Tupper most.
 You call on your victim for things he has plenty of, —
 Those copies of verses no doubt at least twenty of; . . .
 You think they are scrawled in the languor of laziness —

I tell you they're squeezed by a spasm of
craziness,
A fit half as bad as the staggering vertigos
That seize a poor fellow and down in the dirt
he goes!

He sat down, after expressing a hope
that the magazine would help to hu-
manize the world, that people would
worship the true and the pure and the
beautiful,

And preying no longer as tiger and vulture do,
All read the *Atlantic*, as persons of culture do.

Of course, Mr. Howells spoke, and John
T. Trowbridge, and James Freeman
Clarke. Frank Sanborn, who might have
enlivened the occasion, did not speak,
so far as I recollect, but Cranch chanted
one of his own songs and W. F. Ap-
thorpe gave an operatic air. Mr. Aldrich
was inquired of as to his theory of short
stories. He gracefully replied that the
conductors of the *Atlantic* wisely tried to
get each writer to do what he could do
best, and as his special forte, he said,
was listening, he sat down, giving thus a
new exhibition of the ability which he
possessed in such a remarkable degree
of making his dénouement a surprise.
Mark Twain was called upon to respond
for "The President of the United States
and the Female Contributors of the *At-
lantic*." Professing to be staggered by
the greatness of the subject, he asked
permission, with the utmost apparent
solicitude, to attack it in sections. He
thereupon began to talk on quite other
matters. He expressed his reluctance to
accept an invitation to "a publisher's
dinner," and his surprise when he found
that the publishers before him acted in
the present instance as though they really
wanted to conciliate their menials. The
dinner he pronounced "nice," in fact,
"really good," "an admirable dinner,"
"quite as good as he would have had if
he had stayed at home!" The most bril-
liant speeches were those made quietly,
as guest met guest and chatted informal-
ly, and they cannot be reported; but in
this trait the dinner differed but in de-
gree from many another one.

Publishers and authors considered the
dinner of 1874 a success, but it was three
years and two days before the success
was repeated. In 1877, John Greenleaf
Whittier became seventy years of age,
and the *Atlantic* sought to honor him on
his birthday, December 17. The occa-
sion was this time fully reported, and I
find that the press pronounced the com-
pany the "most notable that had ever
been seen in this country within four
walls." It was doubted if the poet's well-
known diffidence would permit him to
attend the dinner, especially as he had a
slight hoarseness that would afford him
a fair excuse for absence. On the morn-
ing of the day, it was my fortune to call
at the office of the publishers, for some
reason, and to meet Mr. Whittier as I
was going out, who asked me if I could
tell him the hour of the dinner! It was
evident that he had come to Boston for
the purpose of being present, as, indeed,
he soon let the publishers know, greatly
to their relief. He had, however, sent to
Mr. Longfellow a letter saying that he
should not be present, as we shall soon
see.

The table was set this time in the east
room of the Brunswick Hotel. Before the
doors were opened there was an hour of
friendly talk, during which many a con-
tributor became acquainted with some
of the men of note with whom he was
to dine. As he entered the dining-room,
each guest received a diagram of the
table, and at once saw where he was
expected to sit. He saw, too, that there
were six seats, at the head of the table,
reserved for Emerson, Longfellow, Whit-
tier, Howells, and Holmes, who sat on
one side and the other of Mr. Henry
O. Houghton, the head of the firm that
published the magazine, and still pub-
lishes it, though he is gone. The scene
was one to be remembered when the con-
tributors had seated themselves, and one
saw Charles Dudley Warner, Professor
Charles Eliot Norton, John T. Trow-
bridge, Colonel Higginson, Edwin P.
Whipple, Mark Twain, John Boyle

O'Reilly, Richard H. Stoddard, Colonel George E. Waring, Luigi Monti, Professor John Trowbridge, and many another whom the world delighted to honor, but seldom had the privilege of seeing at short range and under festive circumstances.

As for the dinner, it was good again, as good, to say the least, as that other that Parker offered, and Mark Twain approved. It was made as memorable by its vinous offerings as that at Porter's was by its intellectual brilliancy, though it was by no means inferior in that respect also. Six different wines were mentioned on the neat menu that every guest was provided with, ranging from Sauterne to Burgundy, through the changes of Sherry, Chablis, "Mumm's Dry," Roederer Imperial, and Claret. Despite all this, it is not recorded by any "reporting spy" that a single guest was found making other than straight lines as he left the room after midnight to seek his home. There were no ladies at the table, but after the dinner had been properly discussed, a number of them were admitted, and some even sat at the devastated tables.

Reports of this feast were not wanting, and the great public was permitted to know at second hand of the flow of soul. Mr. Houghton opened this part of the entertainment by saying that the magazine had just completed its first twenty years, and by welcoming its contributors who had been "in the vigor of manhood when it began," and who were still giving it "the influence of their great names and well-earned reputations," not forgetting the "younger contributors," whom specially he addressed, giving them some encouraging historical information. His little speech was as entertaining as it was well filled with facts. He referred to the days when "pills and poetry, essences and essays, drugs and dramas, were disbursed over the same counter," and to the fact that Whittier's first publisher was "also the vendor of Brandreth's pills." He made a fortune, and Mr.

Houghton left us in doubt "whether it was from the pills or the poetry."

Mr. Houghton introduced the poet in whose honor we were gathered, and Mr. Whittier was received with rapturous applause when he arose, to respond, as was expected, the entire company rising and giving cheer upon cheer. Mr. Whittier diffidently thanked his friends for their reception, and said that his voice was like a certain hero's conscience, which was "of a timorous nature and rarely heard above her breath." He then sat down after asking Mr. Longfellow to read a letter that he had written when he thought that he could not be present. Mr. Longfellow said that he did not know why it was impossible for him to make a speech, and that he was glad that Friend Whittier had come to his assistance. He then proceeded to read Mr. Whittier's letter, which had a touch of humor when read with assumed gravity in the presence of its writer. He also read the poem that it inclosed:—

Beside the milestone where the level sun
Nigh unto setting, sheds its last, low rays
On word and work irrevocably done,
Life's blending threads of good and ill out-
spun,
I hear, O friends, your words of cheer and
praise
Half doubtful if myself or otherwise,
Like him who, in the old Arabian joke,
A beggar slept and crowned Caliph woke.
Thanks not the less. Not with unglad sur-
prise
I see my like-work through your partial eyes;
Assured, in giving to my home-taught songs
A higher value than of right belongs,
You do but read between the written lines
The finer grace of unfulfilled designs.

After asking Mr. Emerson to speak, Mr. Houghton passed the further responsibility of the evening to Mr. Howells. The Sage of Concord said that as soon as he knew that something was expected of him he determined to read Whittier's "Ichabod," characterizing it as unique and striking, and saying that he hardly knew any poem written in America of equal merit. He read the denunciation of Webster so feelingly that it seemed to

be the anathema of a Hebrew prophet.

The Editor, who now removed from the side of Dr. Holmes to the other end of the room, called upon the Autocrat, distinguishing him from those authors who had been floated by the *Atlantic* as the one who floated the *Atlantic*, as Mr. Lowell used often to say that he did. Dr. Holmes was ready, as usual, with his manuscript, and in his offering spoke of Mr. Whittier as

So fervid, so simple, so loving, so pure,
We hear but one strain, and our verdict is
sure —
Thee cannot elude us, — no further we
search, —
'Tis holy George Herbert, cut loose from his
church!

Mr. Howells then eulogized Lowell, the first editor, and asked Professor Charles Eliot Norton to respond for him. Mr. Norton praised Lowell as "the humorist, the wit, the wise thinker, the poet, the sage, the scholar, the friend," in one of the most exquisite of his vignettes, with which those who know him have long been familiar, and assured us that our castles in Spain would be secure so long as James Russell Lowell remained ambassador to the land of Don Quixote.

There were so many other good speeches that the clock struck the midnight hour before the guests could make their way homeward. Among these was a characteristic one by Mark Twain, told in his characteristic style, of an experience of a "literary feller" in the hut of a miner in the wilds of Nevada. The six lights at the head of the table, not being "humorists," were a study while this speech was making. So far as I recall, the Sage of Concord was the only one among them who smoked the excellent cigars that the hosts provided, and, as he performed that restful function, he seemed to make an effort to understand what it all meant, and to fail! It was evidently something not dreamt of in his philosophy. Dr. Holmes, who was mentioned in the speech, covered his blushes with the manuscript from which he had

just read, and Mr. Longfellow assumed his usual amiable countenance, as much as to say, "I understand it all, and am amused!"

Time fails me to speak of what was said by Colonel Waring, Colonel Higginson, Mr. Underwood, Charles Dudley Warner, and the rest. It was a severe strain on the sensitive, shrinking poet in whose honor it was all done, especially as he was suffering from his cold. He retired before the exercises concluded. Of the fifty-seven men who sat at the board, Waring and O'Reilly, and Stoddard and Fiske, and Whipple and Scudder, are no more.

The lights are out, and gone are all the
guests
That thronging came with merriment and
jests.

The next *Atlantic* "dinner" was a breakfast, but it was eaten at noon, still the dinner hour of some literary folk. It was in honor of the seventieth birthday of the Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table, but as the birthday occurred on the 29th of August, in 1809, it was considered best to postpone the cheerful celebration until winter had brought the poet's friends back from their hot weather vacations. December 3 was chosen, and again the Brunswick was the place. The numbers asked this time were greater than ever before, — they had been increasing, in fact, ever since the first dinner given by Mr. Phillips at Parker's. When the day arrived, more than one hundred sat together around six large tables. A remarkable change is found in the fact that more than one-third of the company were ladies! There were two tables at the ends of the room, at one of which sat Mr. Houghton, with Dr. Holmes on one side and Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe on the other. There sat, also, President Eliot, and Mr. Whittier, Mrs. Houghton, Mrs. Wister, Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney, Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson, Phillips Brooks, Mrs. James T. Fields, and Charles Dudley Warner. At a corresponding table at the other end of the

room Mr. Howells was flanked by Julia Ward Howe, Mrs. Mifflin, Mrs. Howells, Rose Terry Cooke, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, James T. Fields, and Mr. Aldrich.

James R. Osgood sat at one of the four other tables intermediate, with Sarah Orne Jewett on one side, and that Miss Sprague whose *Earnest Trifler* was the latest literary sensation, on the other. Governor Rice, Mr. Burlingame, of *Scribner's Magazine*, Mrs. M. E. W. Sherwood, Dr. Freeman Clarke, and Senator Lodge were directly under his eye. Opposite this table were Colonel Higginson, with Clara Erskine Clement, Mrs. Moulton, Lucy Larcom, John T. Trowbridge, John Fiske, William Winter, Alexander Agassiz, and John Burroughs. Still another table seemed to be under the care of Dr. Bellows, of New York, with Kate Gannett Wells and Mrs. Aldrich at his sides, and Professor Norton, Dr. Angell, James Parton, and others near by. The last table to be mentioned was presided over by Mr. Mifflin, now head of the publishing house, with Francis Parkman, Mr. Stedman, Frank Sanborn, Mark Twain, the Reverend Dr. Wharton, and others.

As Mr. Houghton looked over the six tables, he must have felt proud of his growing family! It may be said in passing that during this dinner a telegram was handed to Mr. Osgood ordering a large number of *An Earnest Trifler*, the phenomenal sale of which was surprising the publishers, though the orders would not to-day be considered startling, so great has the country become, and so largely has the circle of readers increased.

The conventional order was followed after dinner, — Mr. Houghton began, and Mr. Howells followed in guiding the flow of eloquence and poetry. The presence of ladies was something to be accounted for, and Mr. Houghton said that they had always been wanted, but that the publishers had been "too bashful" to invite them up to that time, leaving it to be understood that, the magazine

being twenty-two years of age, additional strength of nerve had been developed. He called upon "The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table, O King, live forever!"

Dr. Holmes rose and after giving some reminiscences of the beginning of the magazine, read the poem entitled *The Iron Gate*, which seemed like a farewell. It gave the title to the next volume of Holmes's verse; but the last farewell was not to come for a decade. He said, —

Time claims his tribute; silence now is golden;
Let me not vex the too long suffering lyre;
Though to your love untiring still beholden,
The curfew tells me — cover up the fire.

And now, with grateful smile and accents
cheerful,

And warmer heart than look or word can
tell,

In simplest phrase — these treacherous eyes
are tearful —

Thanks, Brothers, Sisters, — Children, —
and farewell.

Mr. Whittier had retired from the room, but again he had left a poem, this time to be read by Mr. James T. Fields. Then it was that Mr. Houghton, apologizing for the absence of the editor, whom he described as "tall, cadaverous, and grave," using a sharp knife to cut out the brilliant passages and to reduce the articles to the standard *Atlantic* length, introduced Mr. Howells as his representative. Mr. Howells accepted the situation, and said that he was not the author of a printed letter that some of those present might possibly have seen "in the hands of their friends," informing him that the editor regrets that he "cannot use the inclosed contribution," but thanks the author for the opportunity of reading it. On the contrary, Mr. Howells asserted that he was the person who urged the author of a ten-page article to make it twenty, or, better, to extend it into a series, and that the cheques that the authors present had all been in the habit of receiving were from his personal bank account. Of course, he eulogized Dr. Holmes as the one who had made the *Atlantic*. He asked Mrs. Julia Ward

Howe to respond for "The Girls we have not left behind us." Mrs. Howe related her experience in endeavoring to attend in Paris a meeting of *gens de lettres*, and finding that women were not of that class. After saying that the present banquet looked much better in her eyes for having ladies at the table, she read a poem in honor of Dr. Holmes. Charles Dudley Warner followed with expression of the feelings of all for the guest, and then he read a poem by Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson, in which she wove the titles of Dr. Holmes's poems:

His "Last Leaf" flutters not to fall,
But fifty sunny springs to learn;
His "Comet" speeds across the sky,
But year by year will swift return.

The president of Harvard University had never been heard at the *Atlantic* dinners, but now he was present. He said, "How shall I interpolate my unprepared prose into this mass of poetical manuscript? . . . I see here only one or two representatives of the medical profession. It seems to me that it is my duty to remind all these poets, essayists, and story-tellers who are gathered here, that the main work of our friend's life has been of an altogether different nature. I know him as the professor of anatomy and physiology in the Medical School of Harvard University for the last thirty-two years, and I know him to-day as one of the most active and hard-working of our lecturers. . . . When I read his writings, I find traces of this life-work of his on every page. . . . Let us honor him to-day, not forgetting — they can never be forgotten — his poems, his essays, as a noble representative of the profession of the scientific student and teacher."

Mark Twain greeted Dr. Holmes as the first great man who had ever written him a letter, and as the first great literary man from whom he had ever stolen anything. He then related the story of how he had so thoroughly absorbed the dedication of *Songs of Many Keys* that when he wrote the dedication of his *Innocents Abroad*, he reproduced it, greatly

to his surprise! The story has lately been revived in the papers, after nearly thirty years. Mark said that he called upon Dr. Holmes to apologize, and that after he had received absolution, he authorized the Autocrat to "make perfectly free" with any of *his* ideas, and so, he said, "we got along right from the start."

After Mr. J. W. Harper, of the New York publishing house, had spoken, Aldrich was called upon, and he said that he was like Artemus Ward, who felt that he had the gift of oratory, but did not happen to have it by him. Nevertheless he gave a page from his experience. He said that probably five thousand rising poets had sent their books to Dr. Holmes and Dr. Holmes had written to every one of them a letter of kindly advice. Twenty years ago, he added, he sent a book of boyish verse to Dr. Holmes himself, — the first copy that came from the press, as though the doctor was anxiously waiting for it. In acknowledgment he received the "kindest note ever written by a celebrity to an obscurity," in which he was virtually told that he had better not write any more verses until he could write better ones!

E. C. Stedman made a brief speech, and read a poem of which a stanza was,

Whose swift wit like his, with which none dares
to vie,

Whose carol so instant, so joyous, so true?
Sound it cheerly, dear Holmes, for the sun is
still high,

And we're glad, as he halts, to be outsung
by you!

William Winter also came from New York. It is remarkable how well Artemus Ward is remembered. Mr. Winter began by saying that he had been attending a meeting of the Y. M. C. A. with Artemus, and as it did not close until three o'clock in the morning, they were late in reaching their hotel. Then Ward rang for a bell-boy and asked him if he could call up the landlord to receive an important message. The boy said that he could, but he did n't want to, whereupon Artemus insisted that he take the

message, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." The incident, Winter said, impressed him with the necessity of being always prepared for what might happen, and he had brought with him a little poem which he read. It was entitled "Hearts and Holmes." Mr. J. T. Trowbridge followed with a poem — "Filling an Order," and Mr. Howells asked Mr. Osgood to read letters from President Hayes, George Bancroft, George William Curtis, and John Holmes, who were unable to be present. Then Mr. Cranch read a sonnet to Dr. Holmes, after which Colonel T. W. Higginson spoke, as one who, he said, had not lately been a frequent contributor. Naturally he made reference to the presence of ladies for the first time, saying that it reminded him of a political poster that he had seen inviting an attendance at a gathering at which "Ladies, without distinction of sex," were promised a welcome. Colonel Higginson then gave some reminiscences of Dr. Holmes's father, which he was able to do, for he was born and brought up in the adjoining house. Mr. Howells read letters from many more who could not attend: from Carl Schurz, President Porter of Yale, President Gilman of Johns Hopkins, Richard Grant White, Henry Watterston, Mrs. Burnett, Mrs. Agassiz, D. G. Mitchell, Edward Everett Hale, Professor Child, and others, and the great Holmes breakfast was over. Its memories will not pass away, for it was a day of days.

The last *Atlantic* "dinner" was *al fresco*. It was called by the hosts a Garden Party, and was given in honor of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, who owned that she was at least seventy years old on the 14th of June, 1882. The place was the beautiful grounds of the late Governor Claflin at Newtonville. The hour was one at which some literary persons still dine, being from three to six in the afternoon. On this occasion, the "literary exercises" were the chief feature. It is true that there were tables set in the

house, and there were sociable groups around them, but there was a tent outside and under that there were two hundred seats in front of a platform which proved to be the place of chief attraction. Any list of the men and women who occupied the chairs would seem like the index to the *Atlantic*, though, as Mr. Houghton intimated, there were many missing who had shared the pleasures of the former gatherings, — Longfellow and Emerson were specially mentioned, and in truth it seemed as though old times had passed away and a new generation was upon the stage. John T. Trowbridge, Edwin Percy Whipple, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Whittier, Frank Sanborn, Howells, and Aldrich remained, but they made a small minority, especially when the gathering was so much more inclusive than those of yore had been.

Over the platform were the numbers, 1812-1882, and in the midst of the group under them were Mrs. Stowe, Henry Ward Beecher and other Beechers, Mrs. Stowe's husband and son, Miss Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Whittier, Dr. Holmes, and Mr. Frank Sanborn, besides others. At about four o'clock Mr. Houghton made his graceful little speech in which he ranked Mrs. Stowe with "the Miriams, the Deborahs, and the Judiths of old, who now," he said, "shout back the refrain, when you utter the inspired song, — 'Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, The Almighty Lord hath disappointed them by the hand of a woman.'"

Henry Ward Beecher responded for his sister, in a witty speech, saying among other things that when *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was written, some insisted that Mrs. Stowe did not do it, but that her brother Henry did; whereupon, said he, "I wrote *Norwood*, — that killed the thing dead." This launched the speaking, and Mr. Sanborn read a poem by Whittier, Dr. Holmes one of his own, and then one by Miss Phelps. In Dr. Holmes's poem was a stanza containing a Greek pun, —

When Archimedes, long ago,
Spoke out so grandly, "*dos pou sto*,
Give me a place to stand on,
I'll move your planet for you now," —
He little dreamed or fancied how
The *sto* at last should find its *pou*
For woman's faith to land on.

Mr. Whittier's tribute contained the following lines: —

Thrice welcome from the Land of Flowers
And golden-fruited orange bowers,
To this sweet, green-turfed June of ours! . . .
To her, at three score years and ten
Be tributes of the tongue and pen,
Be honors, praise and heart-thanks given,
The loves of earth, the hopes of heaven! . . .
Long ages after ours shall keep
Her memory living while we sleep;
The waves that wash our grey coast lines,
The winds that rock the Southern pines
Shall sing of her.

Letters were read from a number who were not able to be present, and remarks made by Judge Tourgee, author of *A Fool's Errand*, and by the Rev. Edward Beecher, and there was a poem by Mrs. James T. Fields, absent in Europe. Mrs. Stowe made a little address in response to the greetings, and the last "dinner" of the *Atlantic* diners was over! It was a very different occasion from those at Porter's, — even from the small gatherings at Parker's. The enlargement of the borders was like adding water to a cup of tea. There was a suggestion of the old times, but the strength of comradeship had been weakened. A quarter of a century had made a change in the men who remained of the first group of contributors, and the loss of those who had fallen by the way, while it awakened tender thoughts, also made the contributors to the first numbers look with strange feel-

ings at the young persons who seemed to be carrying things on in, perhaps, a doubtful way!

Twenty-five years have now passed since the last of the entertainments — memories of which I have been trying to summon from the vasty deep — occurred.

Fifty years ago the diners dined at the call of the publishers; next they sought no company but their own; and at last they were brought to their feast under the noble elms of Newton, with greatly increased numbers. At first, men only came; at last, the women were almost as many as the men. The first groups were small enough to allow every one to have intimate converse with every other one. Never did they go to the extreme of the afternoon teas as Dr. Holmes is said to have described them, — "Giggle, gabble, gobble and git!" but they came dangerously near to that limit, and then they passed away. The character of the feasts changed, and the men who met were not the same at the end of the quarter-century that they were at its beginning. The chapter ended and history makes its record. The Autocrat, you remember, hoped that the *Atlantic* would endure until an ideal state of society should be established. That time has not yet arrived, but the magazine is still doing its best to bring it on, and the world is better than it was at the end of the year 1857, though we must feel with Dr. Holmes that

There are no times like the old times, — they
shall never be forgot!

There is no place like the old place, — keep
green the dear old spot!

There are no friends like our old friends, —
May Heaven prolong their lives!

VOL. 100 — NO. 5

THE EDITOR WHO WAS NEVER THE EDITOR

BY BLISS PERRY

UPON the wall of the *Atlantic* office, among the portraits of former editors, there may be seen a fine open face, with striking eyes and a beard worn longer than is now the fashion. It is a fair likeness of Francis H. Underwood, the projector of the magazine. At least four years before the *Atlantic* came into being, he originated the plan, engaged the contributors, and but for the failure of a publisher would have enjoyed the full credit of the enterprise. When the magazine was finally launched, in 1857, Underwood was still the initiating spirit. It was he who pleaded with the reluctant head of the firm of Phillips, Sampson and Co. As "our literary man," in Mr. Phillips's comfortable proprietary phrase, he sat at the foot of the table among the guests at that well-known dinner where the project of the magazine was first made public. He visited England to secure the services of the first British contributors. Recognizing that Lowell's name was of the highest importance to the success of the new venture, Underwood loyally accepted the position of "office editor," as assistant to his more gifted friend. When the breaking up of the firm of Phillips, Sampson and Co., in 1859, threw the ownership of the magazine into the hands of Ticknor and Fields, Underwood went out of office, as did Lowell in due time. He had thereafter a varied and honorable, although a somewhat disappointed career, which has already been sketched in this magazine¹ by the sympathetic pen of J. T. Trowbridge.

A graceful writer, and a warm-hearted, enthusiastic associate of men more brilliant than himself, Underwood's name is already shadowed by that forgetfulness which awaits the second-rate men of a

generation rich in creative energy. For it must be admitted that his ability was not of the first order; as the slang of the athlete has it, he never quite "made the team." But he played the literary game devotedly, honestly, and always against better men; he became, in short, a model of the "scrub" player. The scrubs, as every one knows, get a good dinner at the end of the season, listen to the thanks of the coaches, and then are straightway forgotten.

Underwood, however, gave alms to oblivion by several useful volumes, and by keeping an extraordinary scrap-book.¹ In two huge leather-backed volumes are pasted hundreds upon hundreds of letters received during his forty years of correspondence with many of the foremost American and English writing men. There are a dozen or more from Lowell, many from Emerson, nearly forty from Holmes, and about fifty from Whittier. The letters are arranged alphabetically and run from Alcott and Allibone to Robert C. Winthrop and Elizur Wright; and in point of time they range from Richard H. Dana the elder, who helped found *The North American Review* in 1815, down to authors who are still struggling. Many of these letters throw light upon the unwritten history of the *Atlantic*, besides illustrating the literary conditions which prevailed in this country during Underwood's life. One of the earliest letters, for example, is from N. P. Willis, then a name of first rank in the literary profession. Underwood, who was born in Enfield, Massachusetts, in 1825, had left Amherst College without graduating, had gone to Kentucky, taught school, studied law, and married.

¹ Kindly loaned to me by its present owner, George F. Babbitt of Boston.

¹ "The Author of *Quabbin*," January, 1895.

But he yearned for a literary career, and sent specimens of his poetry to Mr. Willis, who was then in Washington. The veteran's reply is interesting, and his bland phrase, "Your poetry is as good as Byron's was at the same stage of progress," betrays both a kind heart and a long editorial experience.

WASHINGTON, April 29, [about 1848]

MY DEAR SIR, — Your letter forwarded to me here is just received, and I hasten to comply with your request, tho' young poets ask advice very much as lovers do after they are *irrevocably engaged*. In the first place, however, I should always advise *against* adopting the literary profession, for at the best, it is like making waggon-traces of your hair — wholly insufficient for wants which increase as the power gives way. Your poetry is as good as Byron's was at the same stage of progress — correct, and evidently inspired, and capable of expansion into stuff for fame. But there are many men of the same calibre who would go on, and starve up to the empty honor of being remembered (first) when dead, were it not that they could turn their more common powers to account, and live by meaner industry. Poetry is an angel in your breast, and you had better not turn her out to be your maid-of-all-work. As to writing for magazines, that is very nearly done with as a matter of profit. The competition for *notoriety alone* gives the editors more than they can use. You could not *sell* a piece of poetry now in America. The literary avenues are all overcrowded, and you cannot live by the pen except as a drudge to a newspaper. Notwithstanding all this, you will probably try it, and all I can say is, — that you shall have my sympathy and what aid I can give you. If you should come to New York and will call on me, I shall be happy to say more than I have time to write.

Yours very truly
N. P. WILLIS.

Underwood's sojourn in Kentucky in-

creased his native hatred of slavery, and upon his return to Massachusetts in 1850 he enlisted in the Free-Soil movement. In 1852 he was appointed Clerk of the State Senate, Henry Wilson being its President. His acquaintance with public men grew rapidly, and by 1853, when he was but twenty-eight, he conceived the notion of a new magazine. Some such project had long been in the air, as is evident from the letters of Emerson, Alcott, and Lowell, but Underwood was the first to crystallize it. It was to be anti-slavery in politics, but was to draw for general contributions upon the best writers of the country. He succeeded in interesting J. P. Jewett, who had undertaken the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* after the over-cautious Phillips had rejected it, and who was also the publisher of Whittier's poems. With characteristic eagerness Underwood then wrote to desirable contributors, sketching the proposed magazine, and soliciting their coöperation. In selecting some of the letters received in reply, the anti-slavery men shall be heard first. Wendell Phillips was dubious: —

LYNN, Aug. 4th. [1853]

DEAR FRIEND, — I have given your idea the best consideration in my power, and am obliged to come to a different conclusion from Messrs. May and Garrison. I believe the plan has been tried thrice within my time (I mean my anti-slavery life) and has each time failed. I cannot think, therefore, there is much chance for the periodical sketched in your excellent letter. At the same time I am aware my judgment on such a point is worth little; and that an experiment so useful to the general cause of Reform may not be lost, if practicable, I have enclosed your letter, with a few lines, to Theodore Parker, asking him to communicate to you his mature opinion on the subject.

Believe me
very truly yours,
WENDELL PHILLIPS.

MR. F. H. UNDERWOOD.

Theodore Parker was no more encouraging:—

BOSTON, 11 Oct., 1853.

MY DEAR SIR, — The more I think of your enterprise the less likely it seems to me to succeed at present. You know how the *Commonwealth* struggled along, paying nothing and hardly enabling Mr. Wright to live. I fear this undertaking would meet with the same fate — at first. Of its ultimate triumph I have little doubt. I laid the matter before the gentlemen I spoke of Sunday night, and that seemed to be their opinion.

Mr. Phillips and Dr. Howe know much more about such things than I do, and their opinion would be better than mine. I am sorry to seem to pour cold water on your scheme, for I should be glad to see it succeed — and to help it forward if possible.

Yours faithfully,

THEO. PARKER.

MR. UNDERWOOD.

John G. Palfrey thought better of the idea, although in the first of the two letters to be quoted, he speaks of the new periodical as “a weekly newspaper.” The second letter shows a clearer understanding of the project.

CAMBRIDGE, Oct. 10, 1853.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have with great pleasure heard from you of your project of a weekly newspaper, to be devoted to the exposition and defence of anti-slavery principles. I believe that there is an opening for a paper of this description, and I have full confidence in your ability, and that of your proposed coadjutor, to conduct it to the acceptance and advantage of the public.

With great regard, I am,

Dear Sir, your friend and servant,
JOHN G. PALFREY.

CAMBRIDGE, Nov. 22, 1853.

MY DEAR SIR, — I am much gratified to hear that there is a prospect of a speedy accomplishment of your plan of a literary and anti-slavery Monthly Magazine. I shall be very happy to contribute to the

work whenever it is in my power. I have little hope, however, of doing so this winter, my time being pretty strictly appropriated till next May.

With great regard, I am,

Dear Sir, your friend and servant,
JOHN G. PALFREY.

James Freeman Clarke was also optimistic:—

BOSTON, November 23, 1853.

MY DEAR SIR, — I received yesterday your favor of the 21st, in reference to the new Magazine about to be published by J. P. Jewett and Co. The plan appears to me an excellent one, and I am especially glad that it is to be started by Publishers whose business energy will place the publication part on such a basis as will, I trust, ensure success to the enterprise.

I shall be happy to be one of the Contributors to such a Magazine, and to write both for the Reformatory and Miscellaneous Departments. . . .

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

F. H. UNDERWOOD, Esq.

The next three letters will serve to illustrate the attitude of the New York writing men.

Tribune Office,

NEW YORK, Nov. 20, 1853.

DEAR SIR, — Your favor of the 18th is received. It will not be in my power to furnish an article for the first number of your proposed periodical, as I have a number of extra engagements now on hand. If it suits your purpose to receive a monthly letter from New York, giving an off-hand summary of the literature, art, and social gossip of New York, I might incline to furnish it. I will communicate your note to Dana and Fry, and am truly yours,

GEORGE RIPLEY.

F. H. UNDERWOOD, Esq.

NEW YORK, Nov. 24th. [1853]

MY DEAR SIR, — Although I have had so much experience in the starting of new periodicals as to be now habitually doubt-

ful of the success of any, I am still pleased with your project, because I think the country wants an out and out independent and freespoken organ of the kind you propose. *Putnam's* is capital in its way, but is necessarily limited in its range of topics. I cannot however promise to write you anything at present, as my engagements are so many and exacting. Nor have I anything on hand, except a few light travelling sketches which would not perhaps suit your purposes.

Mr. Bryant desires me to say that he is already engaged to write for certain periodicals only, and regrets his inability to lend you his name. Mr. Bigelow is not in the city.

With many wishes for your success I have the honour to be

Your obt. Servant,

PARKE GODWIN.

CANANDAIGUA, N. Y.,
Nov. 24th, '53.

MY DEAR SIR, — Your favor of the 19th, which was sent after me from home, has just reached me. It would give me great pleasure to accede to your request, but it is impossible. My engagements and occupations are such that I could not possibly assist in your enterprise and while I am honored by your application, and should be flattered by the announcement of my name as a contributor, it would be a promise which I could not perform.

I am compelled to decline, but assure you that I attach the *weightiest* significance to the refractory sentence of your letter, and am

Very truly yours,

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

MR. UNDERWOOD.

For the model of an exact, business-like reply, however, demanding the "rate per page (*describing the page*)," we must turn to one of the Concord dreamers.

CONCORD, Nov. 22d, '53.

DEAR SIR, — If you will inform me in season at what rate per page (*describing the page*) you will pay for accepted

articles, — returning rejected within a reasonable time, — and your terms are satisfactory, I will forward something for your magazine before Dec. 5th, and you shall be at liberty to put my name on the list of contributors.

Yours,

HENRY D. THOREAU.

Apparently Underwood's rejoinder was satisfactory, for Thoreau's next letter was accompanied by an actual manuscript.

CONCORD, Dec. 2d, 1853.

DEAR SIR, — I send you herewith a complete article of fifty-seven pages. *Putnam's Magazine* pays me four dollars a page, but I will not expect to receive more for this than you pay to anyone else. Of course you will not make any alterations or omissions without consulting me.

Yours,

HENRY D. THOREAU.

The plan was to issue the first number early in January, 1854, and the contributors, as Thoreau's first letter indicates, were asked to send copy by December 5.

Thomas Wentworth Higginson, then a young minister in Worcester, has printed in his *Old Cambridge* the letters which he received from Underwood. The first one ran: —

BOSTON, November 21, 1853.

DEAR SIR, — Messrs. J. P. Jewett and Co. of this city propose to establish a Literary and Anti-Slavery magazine — commencing probably in January. The publishers have energy and capital, and will spare no pains to make the enterprise completely successful. They will endeavor to obtain contributions from the best writers, and will pay liberally for all they make use of. Politics and the "Humanities," though, of course, prominent as giving character to the Magazine, will occupy but a small portion of its pages. Current literary topics, new books, the Fine Arts, and other matters of interest to the reading public will receive the most careful attention.

I am desired to request you to become a contributor. If you are disposed to favor the project, and have anything written at this time, please forward the MS. with your reply.

If not, please state whether we may expect to receive an article soon — if before December 5th it will materially oblige us. If permitted, we shall announce you as a contributor, in the prospectus. The articles will all be anonymous, as in *Putnam's Monthly*.

Your early attention is respectfully solicited. With high regard,

Truly yours,

FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD.

The scrap-book preserves Higginson's reply, — a letter characterized by the prompt helpfulness which the successive editors of the *Atlantic* have happily experienced for more than half a century.

WORCESTER, Nov. 21, 1853.

DEAR SIR, — I hear with great interest of the proposed magazine, though I have grown distrustful of such enterprises, especially when of Boston origin. The publishers you name are in a position to do it, if any are. I gladly contribute my name to the list of writers — and any counsel I can ever give, when needed.

As to the positive amount of literary aid to be expected from me, I must speak very cautiously. I am very much absorbed by necessary writing, speaking and studies, and it is hard to do collateral work; I have been engaged some four months to write an article for the *Christian Examiner* on Collier's Shakespeare; have all the books collected and yet have done about nothing and finally given up that undertaking.

Besides, I have access to *Putnam* for anything of a literary character in prose and verse, — a better paymaster, I suspect, than the new magazine can be expected to be. To be sure, *Putnam* is not . . . reformatory, and I should feel much more interest in yours. But then again I suspect Mr. Jewett would be much more

keen on the scent of any theological heresy, however latent, than the Editors of *Putnam*.

But I know I shall have something, *in time* to offer, tho' I have nothing now at hand — nor can I before Dec. 5. I have in mind especially an essay wh. will actually give a *new* aspect of the slavery subject! — called "The Romance of Slavery or American Feudalism," grouping the points of analogy between Mediæval slavery and southern. Of Hebrew and Roman slavery there has been an excess of discussion: — of Mediæval serfdom hardly anything is known and yet the analogy is more picturesque and more thorough. I read a lecture on this subject at Salem this winter, but it will not be in condition to print, for a month or two. It will be, in that time, unless I decide to keep it for a lecture.

However it is a new matter to me (your magazine) and these are only first impressions. I answer thus promptly, partly to express my good will and give my name, and partly to suggest some other names, as follows: Rev. D. A. Wasson of Groveland, minister of an Independent Church — a man of rare and growing intellect — author of several verses and a remarkable article on Lord Bacon in the *New Englander*.

Miss Anne Whitney of Watertown, Mass., author of two remarkable poems in my *Thalatta*; I know of no American woman with so much poetical genius, now that Mrs. J. R. Lowell is gone.

Miss Eliza Sproat of Philadelphia, author of the original and admirable "Stories for Children and Poets" in the *National Era*.

But especially and above all, *William Henry Hurlbut* of Cambridge, Mass., author of those brilliant letters fr. Cuba in *National Era* and of some fine articles (a few years ago) in *N. A. Review* and *Chr. Examiner*. He is a young man of the most versatile talent, great industry and (except Theo. Parker) the most universal scholar I know. He is a native of Charleston, S. C., but understands

slavery thoroughly and is (between ourselves) *the* man to edit the magazine. I say this with the utmost delicacy of opinion — not knowing whether you yourself are to be Financier or Agent or Editor of the concern.

I suggest the names of these contributors, not for their sakes, but for that of the magazine to which they would all prove valuable auxiliaries. But perhaps you think I have been quite too officious already.

Cordially yours,
T. W. HIGGINSON.

To this Underwood replied with the second of the letters printed in *Old Cambridge*:—

BOSTON, November 25, 1853.

MY DEAR SIR, — Our Magazine is not yet *definitely* determined upon. *Probably*, however, it will be commenced. The letters I wrote for the enlistment of contributors have been mostly answered favorably. We have already a very respectable list engaged. We are waiting to hear definitely from Mrs. Stowe, who we *hope* will be induced to commence in the Feb. no. a new story. We are thankful for the interest you manifest by sending new names. I shall write to Mr. Hurlbut at once, and to the others in a day or two. Those who have already promised to write are Mr. Carter (formerly of the *Commonwealth*) who will furnish a political article for each number, Mr. Hildreth (very much interested in the undertaking), Thos. W. Parsons, author of an excellent translation of Dante, Parke Godwin of the New York *Evening Post*, Mr. Ripley of the *Tribune*, Dr. Elder of Phila., H. D. Thoreau of Concord, Theodore Parker (my most valued friend), Edmund Quincy, James R. Lowell (from whom I have a most exquisite gem).

Many to whom I have written have not replied as yet.

I shall have the *general* supervision of the Magazine, — intending to get the *best* aid from professed litterateurs in the

several departments. We *do* expect to pay as much as *Putnam* — that is at the rate of three dollars for such pages as *Putnam's*, though it is probable that we shall use a trifle larger type than our New York contemporary. Poetry, of course, we pay for according to value. There are not above six men in America (known to me) to whom I would pay *anything* for poetry. There is no medium; it is good or it is good-for-nothing. Lowell I esteem most; after him Whittier (the last I confidently expect to secure).

The first no. will probably be late — as late as Jan. 5, or even 10th. It is unavoidable. But in Feb. we shall get before the wind.

Mr. Jewett will be liberal as to heresy. Indeed he is almost a heretic himself. For myself I am a member of Mr. Parker's society; but as we must get support moral and pecuniary from the whole community we shall *strive* to offend neither side. In haste,

Most gratefully yours,
FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD.

Whittier, who was on cordial terms with his publisher Jewett, writes with enthusiasm:—

AMESBURY, 25, 11 Mo., 1853.

DEAR FRIEND, — I am delighted with the prospect of a *free* magazine. It will go: the time has come for it and Jewett is the man for the hour.

I will try and send something on or before the 5th. At any rate I shall be glad to write for it, if my health permits.

Wilt thou say to Jewett that I thank him for his capital getting up of my "Sabbath Scene." The illustrations are admirable — the best of the kind I ever saw. They do great credit to the artist.

Thine truly,
J. G. WHITTIER.

In view of his later relations with the magazine, Lowell's letter — written on the same sheet as the manuscript poem which accompanied it — is of peculiar interest. The allusion in the first para-

graph is to the death of Mrs. Lowell, which had taken place a month earlier. The poem, which then bore the title "The Oriole's Nest," with its sad December "Palinode," remained unpublished until Lowell himself, as editor of the *Atlantic*, printed it under the title "The Nest" in March, 1858. It was not included in any volume of his verse until the publication of *Heartsease and Rue* in 1888.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have made an effort for you, for I did not wish merely to say that I wished you well. This is an old poem, and perhaps it seems better to me than it deserves — for an intense meaning has been added to it.

I might promise you something for February if Mr. Jewett would like an expensive contributor so soon again. I have once had an essay upon Valentines in my head, and I could recreate it. It would suit that month.

I should be very happy to see you some evening to talk over your undertaking. Meanwhile, thanking you heartily for the kind note which you wrote some time ago and wishing you every success,

I remain heartily yours,

J. R. L.

F. H. UNDERWOOD, Esq.
23rd Nov., 1853.

I take it for granted that articles will be anonymous as in *Putnam*?

Then came, alas, the hour of bitter disappointment. J. P. Jewett and Co. failed, and the magazine plans were abandoned. On the very day when the copy for the January number was to be ready, Lowell is writing to Underwood:

ELMWOOD, 5th Dec. 1853.

MY DEAR SIR, — I cannot help writing a word to say how truly sorry I was to hear of the blowing-up of your magazine. But it is not so irreparable as if it had been a powder magazine, though perhaps all the harder to be borne because it was only in *posse* and not in *esse*. The explosion of one of these castles in

Spain sometimes sprinkles dust on all the rest of our lives, but I hope you are of better heart and will rather look upon the affair as a burning of your ships which only makes victory the more imperative. Although I could prove by a syllogism in *barbara* that you are no worse off than you were before, I know very well that you *are*, for if it be bad to lose mere coin, it is still worse to lose hope, which is the mint in which most gold is manufactured.

But, after all, is it a hopeless case? Consider yourself to be in the position of all the world before the Mansion of our Uncle Thomas (as I suppose we must call it now — it has grown so respectable) was published, and never to have heard of this Mr. Jew-wit. I think he ought to be — that something ought to be done to him, but, for that matter, nearly all booksellers stand in the same condemnation. There are as good fish in that buccaneering sea of Bibliopoly as ever were caught, and if one of them have broken away from your harpoon, I hope the next may prove a downright Kraaken on whom, if needful, you can pitch your tent and *live*.

Don't think that I am trifling with you. God knows any jests of mine would be of a bitter sort just now, but I know it is a good thing for a man to be made to look at his misfortune till it assumes its true relation to things about it. So don't think me intrusive if I nudge your elbow among the rest.

I shall come and see you some evening this week, when I feel myself not too dull to be inflicted on anybody, and till then

Believe me with sincere interest

Yours,

J. R. LOWELL.

Whittier's note, written the next day, wasted no words: —

AMESBURY, 6th 12 Mo, 1853.

DEAR SIR, — I regret the failure of the magazine project. I was quite sure of its success.

I sent thee a poem, care of J. P. J. and

Co., which I will thank thee to return to me immediately, and thereby greatly oblige
Thine truly,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Whatever publicity may have been given to the failure of Underwood's scheme, Longfellow apparently knew nothing of what had happened, as the date of the following dilatory note will show:—

CAMBRIDGE, February 17, 1854.

DEAR SIR, — I hope you will pardon me for having left so long unanswered your letter about a New Magazine or Literary Paper. The fact is, I could not say "Yes," and did not want to say "No;" and therefore said nothing.

Between the two forms proposed, a Magazine, monthly, and a weekly newspaper, I should have no hesitation in deciding. I very much prefer the latter. You can fire much faster and do more execution.

As to being a contributor to either, it would not at present be in my power. I have already more engagements on hand than I can conveniently attend to, and should feel any addition a burden and a vexation.

I remain, with best wishes for your success,
Very truly yours,

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

By the time Longfellow's letter was written, however, Underwood had entered the counting-room of Phillips, Sampson and Co. Here he lost no opportunities of cultivating the acquaintance of literary men, and in the course of the next two or three years he became prominent in the social gatherings of the Cambridge and Boston writers. He was one of the leaders of that loosely organized group of diners who after 1857 used to meet under the name of the "*Atlantic*" or the "Magazine" Club,—a gathering often confused with the Saturday Club, although Longfellow's *Journal* and many other contemporary writings clearly make the distinction.

The following letter from Professor Felton gives an agreeable picture of the cordiality which characterized the group of men who were so soon to become fellow contributors to the long-deferred magazine.

CAMBRIDGE, Friday, Feb. 13, 1856.
in bed

MY DEAR MR. UNDERWOOD, — I am much obliged to you for taking the trouble of informing me of to-morrow's dinner — but it is like holding a Tantalus' cup to my lips. I returned ill ten days ago from Washington, having taken the epidemic that is raging there at the present moment, and have been bed-ridden ever since, living on a pleasant variety of porridge and paregoric. Yesterday I was allowed to nibble a small mutton-chop, but it proved too much for me and — here I am, worse than ever. I have no definite prospect of dining at Parker's within the present century. My porridge is to be reduced to gruel and paregoric increased to laudanum. I am likely to be brought to the condition of the student in Canning's play,—

Here doomed to starve on water gruel
never shall I see the University of Göttingen,"

and never dine at Parker's again! I hope you will have a jovial time; may the mutton be tender and the goose not tough: May the Moët sparkle like Holmes's wit: May the carving knives be as sharp as Whipple's criticism: May the fruits be as rich as Emerson's philosophy: May good digestion wait on appetite and Health on both—and I pray you think of me as the glass goes round. . . .

Horizontally but ever cordially

Your friend,

C. C. FELTON.

The following note of regret from Emerson likewise refers to another Saturday dinner arranged by Underwood.

CONCORD, 26 August, 1856.

MY DEAR SIR, — I did not receive your note until the Boston train had already gone on Saturday. I am well contented

that the Club should be solidly organized, and grow. I am so irregularly in town, that I dare not promise myself as a constant member, yet I live so much alone that I set a high value on my social privileges, and I wish by all means to retain the right of an occasional seat.

So, with thanks, and best wishes,

Yours,

R. W. EMERSON.

MR. UNDERWOOD.

Underwood now thought that the time was ripe for bringing the magazine project to the front once more. Mr. Phillips was slow to take an interest in it, but finally agreed to consult Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. He had published her *Dred* in 1856, although he had previously rejected *Uncle Tom's Cabin* through fear of alienating his Southern trade. Mrs. Stowe was instantly enthusiastic over the proposed magazine, and promised her support. It was this fact, as Underwood often said in later years, which decided the wavering mind of the publisher. Then came the famous dinner given by Mr. Phillips on May 5, 1857, to the men whose coöperation was thought to be essential. Although Mr. Arthur Gilman's article, printed in the present number of the *Atlantic*, describes this dinner, it may be interesting to quote Mr. Phillips's own letter about it, as given in Dr. Hale's *James Russell Lowell and His Friends* (p. 157).

[May 19, 1857.]

"I must tell you about a little dinner-party I gave about two weeks ago. It would be proper, perhaps, to state that the origin of it was a desire to confer with my literary friends on a somewhat extensive literary project, the particulars of which I shall reserve until you come. But to the party: My invitations included only R. W. Emerson, H. W. Longfellow, J. R. Lowell, Mr. Motley (the 'Dutch Republic' man), O. W. Holmes, Mr. Cabot, and Mr. Underwood, our literary man. Imagine your uncle as the head of

such a table, with such guests. The above named were the only ones invited, and they were all present. We sat down at three P. M., and rose at eight. The time occupied was longer by about four hours and thirty minutes than I am in the habit of consuming in that kind of occupation, but it was the richest time intellectually by all odds that I have ever had. Leaving myself and 'literary man' out of the group, I think you will agree with me that it would be difficult to duplicate that number of such conceded scholarship in the whole country besides.

"Mr. Emerson took the first post of honor at my right, and Mr. Longfellow the second at my left. The exact arrangement of the table was as follows:—

MR. UNDERWOOD

CABOT	LOWELL
MOTLEY	HOLMES
LONGFELLOW	EMERSON

PHILLIPS

"They seemed so well pleased that they adjourned, and invited me to meet them again to-morrow, when I shall meet the same persons, with one other (Whipple, the essayist) added to that brilliant constellation of philosophical, poetical and historical talent. Each one is known alike on both sides of the Atlantic, and is read beyond the limits of the English language. Though all this is known to you, you will pardon me for intruding it upon you. But still I have the vanity to believe that you will think them the most natural thoughts in the world to me. Though I say it that should not, it was the proudest day of my life."

"In this letter," continues Dr. Hale, "he does not tell of his own little speech, made at the launch. But at the time we all knew of it. He announced the plan of the magazine by saying, 'Mr. Cabot is much wiser than I am. Dr. Holmes can write funnier verses than I can. Mr. Motley can write history better than I. Mr. Emerson is a philosopher, and I am not. Mr. Lowell knows more of the old poets than I.' But after this confession he said, 'But none of you knows

the American people as well as I do.'"

Exactly what Underwood thought, as he listened to this self-satisfied speech of his employer, is not recorded in his scrap-book. Nor do the letters of the next few weeks throw any light upon the now familiar story of Lowell's accepting the editorship of the new magazine upon the condition that Holmes should become a contributor, and of Holmes's suggestion that it should be christened "*The Atlantic Monthly*." Who chose John Winthrop's head as a design for the brown cover does not appear.

Underwood, meanwhile, had sailed for England in June to secure contributors. He enjoyed his mission, and his scrap-book contains many hospitable notes from Charles Reade, Wilkie Collins, John Forster, A. H. Clough, and other English writers. Reade was anxious to become acquainted with "any honest publisher who can be brought to see that I am worth one third as much as Thackeray, or more. . . . *White Lies* is my best story." In reply to Underwood's promise that the *Atlantic's* rate of payment would be equal to that offered by the English reviews, James Hannay replies:

"With regard to the remuneration, as you intimated that it was to be regulated by the best pay here, I may mention that that is a guinea a page, or sixteen guineas a sheet."

Encouraged by promises of contributions, Underwood sailed for home, leaving the manuscripts to follow. Some of them, as Mr. Norton relates elsewhere in this number, disappeared forever with Mr. Norton's unlucky trunk. A pleasant note from Shirley Brooks, of the staff of *Punch*, refers to the loss of his manuscript:—

The Garrick Club,
LONDON, Oct. 28, '57.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have been away from London, or your letter would have been answered long ago. I should be ashamed to look at its date but for this, and you will have been sure that the delay was caused in some such manner.

The mishap to which it refers, (your note, I mean) you will almost have forgotten by this time. I have no copy of the article I sent, and whether I can wind myself up to the point of doing it, decently, twice, I hardly know. I seldom can manage that. But as soon as I have my hands a little free I will send you something. In the meantime pray consider that there is no pecuniary matter between us—accept the intention to serve the new magazine—and let us start fresh. Only, if you notice in any of the New York or other papers an article called "My Ghost," do you lay hands on the pirate—the N. Y. *Herald* tells us there are *no police* in that city, or virtually none, but by that time things may be better.

If you can forward me a copy of the magazine to the above address, I shall receive it with pleasure, and will do anything I can to promote its interests here. I trust that none of the catastrophes in your financial world have affected anybody whom you care about. Believe me,

My dear Sir, Yours very truly,
SHIRLEY BROOKS.

F. H. UNDERWOOD, Esq.

By August Underwood was at his desk again, soliciting articles from American authors. Herman Melville, the author of *Moby Dick* and *Typee*, writes:—

PITTSFIELD, Aug. 19th, 1857.

GENTLEMEN,—Your note inviting my contribution to your proposed magazine was received yesterday.

I shall be very happy to contribute, though I cannot now name the day when I shall have any article ready.

Wishing you the best success in your laudable enterprise, I am

Very truly yours,
H. MELVILLE.

PHILLIPS, SAMPSON & Co.
Boston.

Horace Mann, to whom Underwood had written for articles in 1853, replies to a new invitation: "I have no *specific* topic in my mind, but I could not write

on anything outside of your 'cause of Freedom and advancement of sound literature.'"

Very characteristic is this note from William Douglas O'Connor, later the author of *The Good Grey Poet*.

Office *Saturday Eve. Post*,
PHILADA., Aug. 20th, '57.

MY DEAR SIR:—I have been striving very hard to make kosmos out of the chaos of a MS tale I have for some time had on hand—a thing of shreds and patches it is, at present, existing only in stray sheets, scraps and memoranda—but to save my life I cannot get time enough to build this little world of mine, I have to give so much to the affairs of this other world—the *Post*—of which I am in effect, the governor, and all the more so now since the ostensible chief is away, and everything devolves on me. I am secretly chagrined to think that my little star will not be visible this month in the march of your galaxy, for, dropping similes, I wanted very much to have a paper of mine in your first number. However, man proposes and the *Saturday Post* disposes, so I submit, as you will find less disappointment in doing.

I shall still endeavor to give you a story—for the second number if possible, or if not, for a later number—but I beg of you to expect nothing of me, for though my promises are words of fate, I am unable to make them now, my time being already engrossed so much as to make it difficult even to attend to my casual correspondence. And then, besides, when you do get a MS of mine, it is quite likely you will not like it, the revolution and the radicalisms running so naturally to my pen, and my tales being my only present means of securing to myself the luxury of my individual views and opinions.

With many regrets and hopes, and with twice as many good wishes for the prosperity of the coming magazine, I remain very

Truly yours

WM. D. O'CONNOR.

F. H. UNDERWOOD, Esq.

J. T. Trowbridge's note, accompanying his contribution to the first number, shows that he thought that the name of the magazine was not yet determined upon:—

OGDEN, Aug. 24, 1857.

MY DEAR U—, I send you a sketch. I don't know whether it is good or bad. It is a subject I have long wished to write upon; and on the rec't of your letter, I dashed off the history of John Henry Pendlam. I can swear that he is a true type of a certain class of reformers; I have avoided burlesque and exaggeration. But whether the story is suitable for the Magazine, you must determine. Do not use it, if it is not up to the mark.

How about the name? If the "American Monthly" will not do, what do you say to "The Anglo-American"?

J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

P. S.—I have written to R. H. Stoddard to send you a story.

Address me at Wallingford, Vermont.

PAUL.

Here too, is the first of several girlish letters from a woman whose stories gave keen pleasure to the early readers of the magazine, and whose achievement as a pioneer in the field in which Miss Jewett, Miss Wilkins, and Miss Alice Brown have since wrought so notably still awaits due recognition by the critics:—

HARTFORD, August 29th, 1857.

Mr. F. H. UNDERWOOD.

DEAR SIR, — I regret that my absence from home prevented my receiving your letter of the 25th until to-day. I have been idle all summer, because I am not strong, and was forbidden to write, so I have nothing to offer you that is very fresh, or that I should choose to make a "first appearance" in. I have a little sketch of New England life called "Turkey Tracks," not copied: a romance Mr. Curtis had accepted for *Putnam*, "Maya, the Child of the Kingdom," which I have sent for: and a story partly written—"Rachel's Refusal:" any one of these I could send you within a week from date,

if you let me know directly. I hope by and by to do something better for you, when I shall have time and strength to fulfill other and previous engagements.

Be so good as to give me a definite address for the MSS., and let me know your decision as soon as is quite convenient. Letters will most securely reach me directed to the care of Mr. H. W. Terry. With the best wishes for your success I remain

Yours very truly

ROSE TERRY.

I ought perhaps to say that the romance is considered by one of my critical friends the best thing I have ever written. I cannot judge of these things myself.

We have been long in reaching the actual first number of the *Atlantic*. The financial stress of 1857 harassed Messrs. Phillips, Sampson and Co., and publication was nearly suspended, after all. But in October the first issue appeared, under date of November. Underwood's scrap-book contains this highly interesting note from Emerson, concerning editorial suggestions upon two of the four poems which he contributed, in addition to the prose essay on "Illusions," to the initial number. If Lowell suggested, as he apparently did, the substitution of

"If, on the heath, *beneath the moon*,"
for

"If, on the heath, under the moon,"
in the fourth stanza of the "Romany Girl," he certainly proposed "a new cacophony" where there was undoubtedly an "old one." Emerson changed the line in later years to

"If, on the heath, below the moon."
But it is clear from this note that we owe the present form of the superb opening line of "Days," —

"Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,"
to the editor, who had objected to "hypocritical."

CONCORD, Sept 24, 1857.

DEAR SIR, — I return the proof in which I have no correction to make. Mr.

Lowell showed a bad rhythm, but I do not quite like the new word he offered me —

"beneath the moon,"

where the new cacophony troubles my ears as much as the old one; and for the second suggestion about the word "hypocritical," he is right again, but I cannot mend it to-day. If he will alter them, as he proposed before, or otherwise, he has my thankful consent.

Yours,

R. W. EMERSON.

MR. UNDERWOOD.

It is well known, also, that Lowell suggested to Whittier the peculiar form of the refrain which adds so greatly to the effectiveness of "Skipper Ireson's Ride." In Lowell's *Letters* we read: —

CAMBRIDGE, November 4, 1857.

MY DEAR WHITTIER, — I thank you heartily for the ballad, which will go into the next number. I like it all the better for its provincialism — in all fine pears, you know, we can taste the old *pucker*.

I knew the story well. I am familiar with Marblehead and its dialect, and as the burthen is intentionally provincial, I have taken the liberty to print it in such a way as shall give the peculiar accent — thus —

"Cap'n Ireson for his horrd horrt
Was torred and feathered and corried in a
corrt."

That's the way I've always "horrd it" — only it began "Old Flud Ireson." What a good name Ireson (son of wrath) is for the hero of such a history. . .

The scrap-book contains Whittier's reply: —

AMESBURY 6th, 11th Mo., 1857.

D^r. FRIEND, — I thank thee for sending the proof of Cap Ireson, with thy suggestions. I adopt them, as thou wilt see, mainly. It is an improvement. As it stands now, I like the thing well — "hugely" as Capt Shandy would say.

As to the pecuniary allusion of thy note, I am sorely in want of money, (as

who is not at this time) — but of course will await your convenience.

The magazine *will, shall, must* succeed. The election of Banks is a good beginning for it. Thy friend,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

That the ballad made an immediate impression is seen in this note from Fitz-James O'Brien, who writes about the acceptance of his brilliant story "The Diamond Lens:" —

Harper's, FRANKLIN SQ'RE,
Nov. 28th. [1857.]

DEAR SIRS, — I am much pleased that my story has met your approval, and shall be glad at some future time to present you with other articles.

I have not calculated the number of pages which the "Diamond Lens" will make, and will thank you to have the computation made and remit to me the amount according to whatever scale of prices you see fit to include it in.

It will be in a great measure a labor of love to write for a magazine of so high a tone as the *Atlantic*. I have long felt the want of a channel in which to place articles on which I might bestow labor and thought. Here in New York we are far too apt to neglect the higher aims.

Will you permit me to express the great pleasure I have experienced in reading "Skipper Ireson's Ride" in your last number. It abounds in lyrical fire, pathos and strength.

Yours truly,

FITZ-JAMES O'BRIEN.

Messrs. PHILLIPS, SAMPSON & Co.

This reminds me that Thomas Bailey Aldrich, writing in 1897 to a member of the *Atlantic's* staff who had prepared a sketch of the first forty years of the magazine, referred thus to O'Brien's story: —

" . . . I am sorry that the *Atlantic* did not put in its claim to being the father of the short story. Of course there were excellent short stories before the *Atlantic* was born — Poe's and Hawthorne's

— but the magazine gave the short story a place which it had never before reached. It began with "The Diamond Lens" of Fitz-James O'Brien, and ended with — well, it has not ended yet."

The praise elicited by the early numbers is fairly represented by this note from Henry Ward Beecher: —

BROOKLYN, Oct. 31, '57.

MY DEAR SIR, — The *Atlantic* has a good look — robust and bold. I hope for it a historic reputation. As New England has been the Brain of America, it would be a pity if her mouth did not speak worthy of her head and heart.

Very truly yours,

H. W. BEECHER.

Although the authorship of the articles was supposed to be kept secret, a privately printed list of the authors in each number was soon sent out to newspaper reviewers and other friends of the magazine. It was not until the tenth volume, however, in 1862, that an index of authors was printed at the completion of each volume. The first signed articles to appear were Harriet Hosmer's "Process of Sculpture" and Goldwin Smith's "England and America," in December, 1864. Occasional signed articles followed, such as William M. Rossetti's in 1866 and George Eliot's in May, 1870, but it was not until July, 1870, that signatures were regularly used. Inasmuch as the names of the more prominent contributors engaged were printed in the initial advertising pages, it was not difficult to guess the authorship of most of the articles. But even without this, discerning readers were at once aware of the singularly high quality of the new periodical.

Wilkie Collins wrote from London: —

11 Harley Place, Marylebone Road,
LONDON, December 30th, 1857.

MY DEAR SIR, — . . . Pray don't trouble yourself to answer this letter, until my contribution to the magazine reaches you — when I shall be glad to

hear of its safe arrival. I shall look out with great interest for the story to which you refer in the third number. Excepting the difficulties of finding good tellers of tales (sorely felt here, let me say, as well as in America), with such men as Longfellow and Emerson to head your list of contributors, I cannot think that you need fear the rivalry of any magazine in any region of the civilized world.

Believe me to remain

Very cordially yours,

WILKIE COLLINS.

F. H. UNDERWOOD, Esq.

Charles Reade, several of whose vigorous and pugnacious epistles were preserved by Underwood, wrote in the autumn of 1858:—

6 Bolton Row, MAYFAIR, Oct. 10.

DEAR SIR, — I beg to acknowledge yours of date Sept. 28, and as requested answer by return mail. I will never under any circumstances submit a MS. of mine to the chance of any other writer comprehending it and seeing its merit. If therefore *that* is an absolute condition, you will never see a line of mine in the *Atlantic Monthly* while I live. The stories you do publish in the *Monthly* could never have been selected by any judge competent to sit in judgment on me. We had better wait a little. You will find that every word of fiction I produce will succeed *more* or *less*; this in a world crammed with feeble scribblers is a sufficient basis for treaty. As to the exact *manner* of success no man can pronounce on it before-hand.

"White Lies" which you seem to think has failed has on the contrary been a greater success than "It is Never Too Late to Mend." At all events it is so represented to me by the Publishers and this not in complimentary phrases only of which you and I know the value but in figures that represent cash.

Yet, as you are aware it had to resist a *panic*. A truce to egotism, and let me congratulate you on the circulation and merit of your monthly. It is a wonder-

ful product at the price. Good paper, excellent type, and the letters disengaged so that one can read it.

Then as for the matter, the stories are no worse than *Blackwood's* and *Frasers'*, etc., etc., and some of the other matter is infinitely beyond our monthly and trimestral scribblers, being genuine in thought and English in expression. Whereas what passes for criticism here is too often a mere mixture of Cuck-oo and hee-haw. A set of conventional phrases turned not in English but in Norman French and the jargon of the schools.

After five and twenty years of these rotten old cabbage stalks without a spark of thought, novelty or life among them, I turn my nose to such papers as your "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" etc. with a sense of relief and freshness. . . . Success attend you, and when you are ripe for

Yours truly

CHARLES READE

let me know.

Meanwhile Underwood was unweariedly active, not only at his desk but in the pleasures of good fellowship with other musical, artistic, and literary spirits. His scrap-book contains many a charming whimsical letter from F. J. Child, who usually addressed him as "Sottobosco," and was wont to drop into French or Italian for a convenient word. Even the self-contained Emerson writes about the "luck which goes to a dinner" in anything but a transcendental vein:—

CONCORD, 21 Nov. [1857.]

DEAR SIR, — I am sorry I cannot come to town to-day, and join your strong party at dinner. I shall be in town on Tuesday, probably, and I will not fail to come to your Counting Room and I will think in the meantime what I can do. From what you say of the club dinner, I have no dream of any such self-denying ordinance as you intimate. There is always a good deal of luck goes to a dinner, and if ours was a heavy one, as you say it was, there is the more reason to believe the luck will turn and be with us next time.

But I was in the dark about it, and only regretted that I could not stay longer to hear the stories out. I can send you nothing for the *Atlantic* sooner than the end of the month, but of this I will speak when I see you.

Respectfully,
R. W. EMERSON.

MR. UNDERWOOD.

Emerson's next letter alludes to the famous dinner at Porter's Tavern, already described for this month's *Atlantic* by Mr. Gilman.

CONCORD, Friday Evening,
18 Dec. [1857.]

DEAR SIR, — I have been out of town for a few days and find your messages only now on my return to-night. I am sorry you should have deferred the good meeting on my account, for though I cannot help a feast, I hate to hinder one. But if Mr. Lowell and you have chosen that I shall come, I will not stay away on Monday at 5. You say at *Porters* which I suppose to be *Porters* at Cambridge. If not send me word. You are very kind to offer me a bed; but I shall have to go to my old haunts. So with thanks,

Yours,
R. W. EMERSON.

MR. UNDERWOOD.

After the appearance of the January number (1858) Whittier writes: —

DEAR FD, — A lady friend of mine, Mrs. Randolph of Philada. sends me the enclosed to hand over to thee if I think best.

I believe there is something due me — but I would not mention it were it not for the fact that, in common with most others, I am at this time sadly "out of pocket."

Dr. Holmes' "Autocrat" is thrice excellent and the little poem at its close is booked for immortality.¹

Very truly thy friend,
J. G. W.

Give us more papers like "N. E. Ministers."

¹ "The Old Man Dreams." Jan., 1858.

Of the February number Judge Hoar of Concord writes: —

Jan. 27, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR, — I am extremely flattered and obliged by your invitation to dine with the Magazine Club, and (as the French have it) inexpressibly desolated by my inability to accept it. I am attending a hearing before a Railroad Committee at the State House which is to go on at 3 p. m. and would leave no time for the dinner.

My best wishes attend the Magazine, its editors and contributors. May it never blow up! I think the February number surpassed any promises that were made for it — and that the Doctor's exquisite little "Nautilus" is in rather a finer strain than anything he has given us before.

Very truly yours,
E. R. HOAR.

F. H. UNDERWOOD, Esq.

Meanwhile Charles Eliot Norton was writing from Newport, December 25, 1857: "I am very glad to hear of the success of the *Atlantic*. The third number certainly shows no falling off. . . . If you care for this that follows from Ruskin you are welcome to have it published. . . . Mr. Ruskin says: 'I was delighted with the magazine and all that was in it. What a glorious thing of Lowell's that is, — but it is too bad to quiz Pallas. I can stand it about anybody but her.'"

A little later Mr. Norton, with a kindness which has not ceased during half a century, was commending a new English story writer to the *Atlantic's* attention, — no less a personage than "Mr. George Eliot!"

NEWPORT, Monday. [1858.]

DEAR MR. UNDERWOOD, . . . "Adam Bede" seems to me the best novel in point of artistic development of the story and clear drawing of character that we have had for a long time. It does not show so much imagination as Miss Brontë's books, — nor such fine feminine insight and tenderness of feeling as Mrs. Gaskell's.

But if you could get Mr. George Eliot to write a story for the *Atlantic* I think it would be sure to answer well. It would require a handsome offer to tempt him, — for his book is universally popular in England, and he can make his own terms with the publishers. . . .

Ever truly yours,

CHARLES E. NORTON.

That there were some thorns in the editorial cushions, however, is plainly indicated in some of Lowell's *Letters*, and Underwood had his share of them. Would-be contributors then, as now, studied the pages of the magazine and could not understand why their own articles were not better than those selected by the editors. Witness this sorrowful note from the author of *Bitter Sweet* and *Kathrina* : —

Republican Office,
SPRINGFIELD, Dec. 24, 1857.

DEAR SIR: — I am too old and too busy to make myself miserable over what in other circumstances would be a great disappointment to me. It is simply mortification, but I bow to the editorial right. The reason given for not publishing the "Talk with my Minister" I understand. The reason for declining the sketch, I find it hard to understand with the pages of the *Atlantic* before me. So of "My Children." You and the enterprise with which you are connected have my best wishes, and you will be relieved to know that I shall read the Monthly and trouble you no more. With regards to Mr. Phillips,

Very truly yours,

J. G. HOLLAND.

F. H. UNDERWOOD, Esq.

It is pleasant to see that Underwood pasted into his scrap-book another letter from Dr. Holland, twenty years later, and of a more agreeable kind: —

Editorial Rooms of *Scribner's Monthly*,
743 Broadway,
NEW YORK, October 10, 1878.

DEAR MR. UNDERWOOD, — Do you remember me? I used to write for you —
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a little. Now, by Dr. Holmes's suggestion, I am going to ask you to "return the compliment."

We are to have an illustrated biography of the brilliant doctor, and you are the man chosen to write it. Will you do it? About 8,000 words.

Yours very truly,

J. G. HOLLAND.

One contributor, at least, smarted under Lowell's exercise of the editorial functions. This was Parke Godwin, an able and opinionated man, who had written for the first number an article on "The Financial Flurry," — a subject not untimely, by the way, for November, 1907. He followed it with political articles in January and February, 1858, but to his eight pages on "Mr. Buchanan's Administration," in the April number, Lowell, apparently without consulting Mr. Godwin, added six pages of his own, expressing "contempt" and "humiliation" at the administration. The editor's portion of the article was indeed separated from the contributor's by a blank line, and the article was of course unsigned. But Godwin was very angry, as his letter to poor Underwood, who had apparently attempted an explanation, will show: —

NEW YORK, March 26, '58.

MY DEAR MR. UNDERWOOD, — The purport of your note, if I understand it, is, that "your publishers" do not like my articles, because a certain alleged want of "fervor" disappoints the newsvenders. As this is the first expression of opinion that I have had from anybody, connected with the magazine, I am glad to be enlightened.

The deficiency imputed to them, or any other deficiency, would have been a good reason for suppressing them, altogether: but it is not a good reason for mutilating them; nor does it justify any man in appending to them, without my knowledge or consent, several pages of his own remarks.

These articles were written after a

careful survey of the whole field of discussion, — from a pretty good knowledge of the state of public opinion; and in view of the yet nascent tendencies of parties. They were addressed to the reason and good sense of the American people rather than to the feelings and prejudices of factions. I constructed them also — particularly in the omissions — with reference to the near and probable future of Parties, so that the Cause of the Right would not be injured by any needless virulence, — and yet the truth be quite openly and roundly asserted. I did not hope to satisfy the “fervid” Abolition sentiment of New England: nor to write sensation articles for the newsvenders: but I did hope to make the Magazine gradually a power and an authority in the best minds of the country. It seems that I have made a mistake: and that my considerate sentences are unsuited to the “fervid” atmosphere of Boston.

Now, this is a mistake that I cannot, because I will not correct. I have never yet written for mere factions or localities. I have studied the politics of this country many years, with an average degree of intelligence, I hope: with the sincerity of a patriot, I know: and also in the large and thoughtful spirit of philosophy. I am therefore as a writer, no “thunderer” — as the gentleman who attempts to supply my deficiencies is, — perhaps, — and consequently, as thunder is needed, I willingly resign my place to him. I shall hereafter look with much interest towards the demonstrations of this new Love, — hoping that you too may be satisfied!

I learn from your note that Mr. Lowell was the person who took upon himself to curtail my article, and then to substitute his own matter. For Mr. Lowell’s general poetic and literary abilities I have a high respect: but I have never heard of him as a peculiarly competent political thinker or writer: and, however that may be, I must say frankly that I should prefer to put my writings before

the public without his “improvements.”

Under these circumstances I do not see how you can expect from me the promised article on the “Decadence of Democracy;” a part of what I reserved to say in that Mr. Lowell has anticipated, and the rest, I imagine, would be exposed to the same liabilities the former articles have been. The conditions are not accordant with my sense of self-respect. At the same time, as I may not have contributed my full number of pages, according to our original agreement, I will endeavor to satisfy the terms of the contract in some other line.

The sketch entitled “Attilee” you do not refer to, — nor my offer of the history, — and I beg leave therefore to withdraw both from your consideration.

You speak of “conflicting interests and opinions,” — but let me say that I have had no conflict with anybody. I was solicited to write, and did so (often in too great hurry under your urgency): and since what I have written does not suit you, you have a perfect right to say so. I should have liked it better if you had been more direct and frank in your method of communicating the fact; but I certainly acquit you personally of an unkindness or unfriendliness in the premises. My sentiments as to Mr. Lowell’s proceedings are another affair.

Fred Correns and I had arranged to go and eat a dinner with you on Saturday: but as we are afraid that we should be found very cold and dull clods amid the fervid and glowing wits who surround Maga, our prudence has got the better of our valour: we shall instead warm up our heavy clay with some less Olympian brewages.

Yours truly,

PARKE GODWIN.

Other editorial embarrassments were of a slighter character. In a sketch of Thomas Bailey Aldrich which the present writer prepared for the May (1907) *Atlantic*, there was printed a dignified letter from the young Aldrich to Underwood,

May 25, 1858, refusing to make some suggested changes in the rhymes of his poem "Blue Bells" and consequently withdrawing the verses. Further search in the scrap-book reveals the fact that it was Lowell himself who had desired the alteration, and who was now wondering what had become of the poem. But the *Atlantic* never saw it again; although Aldrich ultimately adopted the editorial suggestion.

[1858.]

MY DEAR UNDERWOOD, — You will remember that I asked you to send the "Blue Bells" to Mr. Aldrich for an alteration in one of the stanzas. When that is made it shall go in. I think you have it.

I am going to make a gaol-delivery of verse in the next number.

Yrs. ever,

J. R. L.

One is tempted to quote all of Aldrich's inimitable notes to Underwood, as well as letters from Sainte-Beuve and other foreign writers, and many a friendly line from Holmes and Whittier. How characteristic of the Autocrat is the blithe "let her slide" of the following epistle, referring to the lines "The Living Temple" (May, 1858).

MY DEAR MR. UNDERWOOD, — If it is possible to change a word in my last poem I can get rid of a repetition I have just noticed. If it is too late, let her slide. Instead of

"But warmed by that mysterious flame"
Read

"But warmed by that unchanging flame."

Yours, O. W. H.

Monday evening.

But the end of Underwood's editorial work upon the magazine was at hand. Mr. Phillips's death in the summer of 1859, following the death of Mr. Sampson, led to the suspension and dissolution of the firm. A letter from a worried New York poet paints the situation: —

Debenture Room, Custom House,
NEW YORK, Sept. 7, '59.

DEAR SIR, — I wrote Messrs. Phillips and Sampson a business note two or three weeks ago, asking them to send me a check for a poem of mine in the August number of the *Atlantic Monthly*. No check has reached me; no notice has been taken of the note. As both members of the firm have "gone dead," I suppose it useless to write them beyond the Styx, so I trouble you. The *house* lives, I suppose, if the *men* die. I want the money for the poem, whatever it may be, or I want to know that I am not to have it, so that I may forget all about it, and turn to

"Fresh fields and pastures new."

Will you not see to the affair and oblige me? Have a check, or the money sent me (my direction is over leaf) or tell me for what sum to draw on Phillips and Sampson. At any rate answer this note, that I may know that it reaches you. Perhaps I had better tell you that the poem was printed under the head of "The End of All."

Respectfully, etc.

R. H. STODDARD.

F. H. UNDERWOOD, Esq.
Boston.

A kindly note from George William Curtis, two weeks later, is like the fall of the curtain: —

NEW YORK, 20 Sep., 1859.

MY DEAR SIR, — Will you send me all the unused MSS. of Mr. Cranch's that you have, and can you tell me the probable destiny of the plates of *Huggermauger* and *Kobbotozo*? Was the contract for a limited term, — I have forgotten.

The news of the suspension of your house fell heavily upon all of us who were interested in the publishing of good books and of the *Atlantic*. My constant employments have engaged me elsewhere, — but could not lead me beyond the heartiest sympathy with the spirit of the magazine and admiration of its excellence.

What will you do? Can I keep you here in New York?

Very truly yours,
GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

The magazine itself was transferred to the house of Ticknor and Fields, in a fashion amusingly described in the Contributors' Club of the present issue. Both Lowell and Underwood lingered in office for a while, the former until May, 1861. J. L. Motley, writing to Underwood from London on November 11, 1860, in praise of the *Atlantic*, says "I am writing this under the impression that you are still editor of the magazine." But the happiest part of Underwood's life was over. He now moved from Cambridge to South Boston. For many years he served as Clerk of the Superior Court, devoting his spare hours to music and literature. His friends remained faithful, and the following polyglot note from Lowell, inviting him to an evening of whist with John Bartlett and John Holmes, is but one of many invitations which testify to the intimacy of such companionship.

ELMWOOD, Thursday.

MY DEAR UNDERWOOD, — Come early and come often. J'ai tout arrangé: les deux Jeans y seront de bonne heure, et nous en ferons une vraie nuit de vacances. Votre billet, tout cordial qu'il était, et plein de bonté à mon regard, m'a vraiment réchauffé le cœur. Vous trouverez un lit chez nous, et retournerez à la Cour Supérieure de bon matin, y portant un mal de tête des meilleurs, si le vieux Bourbon et les heures tardes n'ont pas perdu de force. Venite, dunque, a che ora vi piacerà, e sarete il benvenuto!

Affectionately yours,
J. R. L.

In 1871 and 1872 Underwood issued Handbooks of British and American authors, and the correspondence involved in these tasks, as well as in his biographies of Longfellow, Whittier, and Lowell, is well represented in his scrap-book. There

are long letters, for example, from Parkman and Motley, setting forth their aims in the great historical undertakings to which their lives were so largely devoted.

One passage from a letter of Parkman attempts to explain why Underwood had not enjoyed a greater prestige. He was "neither a Harvard man nor a humbug"!

50 Chestnut St.,
April 15, 1875.

MY DEAR MR. UNDERWOOD, — . . . I wish that your connection with the *Atlantic* could have been continued long enough to give your literary powers and accomplishments a fair chance of just recognition. It is for the interest of us all that men like you should be rated for what they are worth. Harvard College and its social allies answer a very good purpose in defending us — to some extent — against the intellectual clap-trap and charlatanry which prosper so well throughout the country; but those who are neither Harvard men nor humbugs may be said to be the victims of their own merit, having neither the prestige of the one nor the arts of the other. . . .

With cordial regards,
Very truly yours,
F. PARKMAN.

Occasionally a former contributor would write him a cordial note. One of these letters, from Rose Terry, inclosed a charming girlish photograph, — the only photograph preserved in the scrap-book.

COLLINSVILLE, Nov. 28th, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. UNDERWOOD, — Your letter of October 24th only reached me yesterday, and I am afraid you have thought me very uncivil.

I am very glad to have the opportunity of doing even so little a thing for you, to whom I owe so much kindness and consideration during our mutual engagements with the old *Atlantic*, which after all seems to me far better than the new! I congratulate you on having "drifted" out of literature, it is "weariness to the flesh" and small satisfaction

to the spirit. The photograph I send you is one from a picture (an ambrotype) taken about the time when I first wrote for the *Atlantic*; I send it because it is the prettiest one I ever had; a feminine reason, but then I never was strong-minded. A picture now would be anything but pleasant, illness and anxiety for years are not beautifiers! I hope at least the face may express to you all the good wishes I have for you and yours; and be to you always the face of a friend even when its original has "gone over to the majority."

Yours very cordially,
ROSE TERRY.

Of the letters of congratulation received upon Underwood's appointment as United States Consul at Glasgow, in 1885, Whittier's is worth printing, as showing that he, like Motley, was under the impression that Underwood had been the *Atlantic's* first editor:—

HOLDERNESSE, N. H.,
7th Mo. 27, 1885.

MY DEAR UNDERWOOD, — I have been away for some time trying to gain some strength from the hills, and have just seen a paragraph in the papers by which I am glad to learn of thy appointment as U. S. Consul at Glasgow. I am heartily rejoiced at it, and hasten to congratulate thee. President Cleveland has done a handsome thing in thus recognizing one of the "literary fellows" who had the honor of the first editorship of the *Atlantic Monthly*.

I have been in Boston only once for the last year, and then only for a day or two. I wish I could see thee before thy departure for Glasgow, but that is not possible in my state of health. I must not leave here during this hot weather. I am glad our country and its literature is to be so well represented in the land of Burns and Scott.

God bless thee and prosper thee!
Thy old friend,
JOHN G. WHITTIER.

These later notes from Whittier refer

to the biography upon which Underwood was engaged. They are vigorous, and very characteristic.

AMESBURY, 4 Mo. 14, 1883.

DEAR FD., — . . . Don't make too big a book, and don't try to account for everything I have written or not written, or done, or not done. A mere mention of the fact that I have written in my first attempts a great [deal] of prose and rhyme which I would not now insult the reader by reproducing, is enough. And do not forget that I have lived a hard life outside of my verse making. I am a *man* and not a mere verse maker.

Thine truly,
JOHN G. WHITTIER.

AMESBURY, 6 Mo. 14. [1883.]

DEAR F. H. UNDERWOOD, — . . . I see one of the chapters headed "Beginnings of Fame." I don't think at the time mentioned the word *Fame* is applicable. It is safe to say that there are now in the United States ten thousand boys and girls who can write better verses than mine at their age. The single fact is that my first scribblings are very poor and commonplace.

Thine truly,
JOHN G. WHITTIER.

ASQUAM, HOLDERNESSE, N. H.,
7 Mo. 21, 1883.

DEAR FRIEND, — I am grateful for thy generous estimate of my writings in "Characteristics," but I fear the critics will not agree with thee. Why not anticipate them, and own up to faults and limitations which everybody sees, and none more clearly than myself. Touch upon my false rhymes and Yankeeisms: confess that I sometimes "crack the voice of melody and break the legs of time." Pitch into "Mogg Megone." That "big Injun" strutting round in Walter Scott's plaid, has no friends and deserves none. Own that I sometimes choose unpoetical themes. Endorse Lowell's "Fable for Critics" that I mistake occasionally simple excitement for in-

spiration. In this way we can take the wind out of the sails of ill-natured cavers. I am not one of the master singers and don't pose as one. By the grace of God I am only what I am, and don't wish to pass for more.

I return the sheets, with this note. Think of my suggestions and act upon them if it seems best to thee.

Always thy friend,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

AMESBURY, 1 Mo. 20, 1884.

MY DEAR UNDERWOOD, — I am very sorry to find thee lay so much stress on dragging to light all the foolish things written by me, and which I hate the thought of. For mercy's sake let the dead rest. (1) in regard to "Mogg Megone" (a poem I wish was in the Red Sea), — I know Benjamin had it, I thought in New York. It seems he was Ed. of the *N. E. Magazine* & published it there. (2) Abolition poem by Isaac Knapp. I know nothing of it. All my anti-slavery poems are in my collected works. I see no use in setting all the literary ghouls to digging for something I have written in my first attempts at rhyme. I detest the whole of it. . . .

Ever and truly thy friend,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Underwood's experiences in Great Britain, both at Glasgow and later at Edinburgh, — where he was Consul during Cleveland's second administration, — have already been touched upon by Mr. Trowbridge. Between the two consulships he wrote a novel, *Quabbin*, in which he described from that benign distance his native town. He received many social honors during his residence abroad, and the degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him by the University of Glasgow. He made friends, as always and everywhere, and the most brilliant of living English writers is represented in the scrap-book

by some letters inquiring into the value of certain American securities. To name these securities now might invoke the Comic Spirit.

Underwood never came home to that world which had more or less grown away from him. He died at Edinburgh in 1894. Versatile in gifts and genial in spirit, he was associated, as we have seen, with some of the best men of his day, but he himself never quite "arrived." There were Celts of old time who "always went forth to the fight, but they always fell." One likes them none the worse for that. During the Civil War, Underwood's fertile brain devised a curious project, which had no other result, apparently, than the creation of one more remarkable autograph for his scrap-book. He wished to start a saw-mill in Florida. Every magazine editor, as is well known, has his moments of keen desire to be running a saw-mill somewhere. But Underwood picked out an actual spot, then under occupation by Federal troops, and addressed a respectful letter to President Lincoln, setting forth the benefits to the nation which would accrue from the said saw-mill through the promotion of emigration to Florida. Here is the very document, thrown carelessly into the scrap-book, endorsed by leading citizens of Boston, with Ex-Governor Boutwell at the head, by Charles Sumner and Henry Wilson, Senators from Massachusetts, by Major General Gillmore, then at Hilton Head, and by the President of the United States:—

I fully approve, subject [to] the discretion and control of the Commanding General.

March 26, 1864.

A. LINCOLN.

A saw-mill in Florida! What a castle in Spain, for this editor who was never the Editor!

UNBOUND OLD ATLANTICS

BY LIDA F. BALDWIN

IN a corner of the old sitting-room at home stood a tall, old-fashioned secretary, with two deep drawers in its lower part. In these drawers were packed away old numbers of the *Atlantic Monthly*. Our father's subscription to the magazine began with its first number, that of November, 1857. This was in his early married life; in the course of years the old *Atlantics* had filled full the deep lower drawer, and were crowding out of the upper drawer, despite my mother's protest, the linen tablecloths and napkins that rightfully belonged there. Lowell's line in *The Cathedral*, "Poor Richard slowly elbowing Plato out," has in some odd way always recalled to me that home process of eviction. Although in this case it was, if anything, Plato who was elbowing out Poor Richard.

As we children grew up in the home those two deep drawers in the old secretary became to us a storehouse where we could always find something to read; a storehouse that we neglected when new books came, but constantly kept turning back to when the new book was exhausted. When *Little Women* came the drawer was neglected. When *Death Trailer, the Chief of the Scouts* shook in my excited hand (my sincerest thanks to Mr. Harvey for his defense of the dime novel in the July *Atlantic*), its bright yellow cover blotted out of my mind all memory of the duller yellowish-brown covers of the old *Atlantics*.

But *Little Women* and *Death Trailer* were only occasional, they came and went; and always there were the drawers full of the old magazines for us to fall back on. These were ready to welcome us at any moment; they were not resentful at our neglect, but were secure in their abiding power to charm.

It was on long Sunday afternoons that we most often turned to them. No picture of the old home life comes more often than that of the old sitting-room with one sister sitting cross-legged on the floor in the open space between the lounge and the old secretary, so that she could reach out her hand to the open drawer when she wanted a fresh magazine; and with the other sister stretched full length on the floor, with all the magazines that contained some one continued story collected around her.

We had our troubles with those continued stories, for often there was a number missing: if it was n't the final number we simply read on undisturbed; but if it was, then we made up out of our own heads an ending to suit ourselves. One of the missing numbers was that of April, 1861, which had in it the last installment of *Elsie Venner*. Since growing up I have often wondered what Oliver Wendell Holmes would have thought of the ending that the girl of twelve found appropriate for his psychological study. Her ending did n't have any psychology in it, and there was no "study;" she finished the story.

It was an understood law between the two sisters that if one was called away to finish some household task, her open magazine must not be taken by the other. Late one afternoon my sister had been called away to help about the supper, and I sat there selfishly rejoicing that she and not I had been called, and comfortably finishing my own story. When it was finished I sat down by my sister's open magazine, meaning just to glance at it. Ah, but the book lay open at "The Man without a Country;" and the glance grew into eager, absorbed reading. When my sister came back I could not give the book

up, so she let me read it with her. Then the two girls stretched out on the floor in the dusky sitting-room, with elbows firmly planted, and with chins resting on the palms of their hands, and read the story together by the firelight.

Do you who have read that way remember, if you were the quicker reader, having to wait for the other one to catch up before you could turn the leaf? Always the most interesting parts came at the bottom of the right-hand page. To this day I can remember just where in "The Man without a Country" came some of the places where I had to wait for a leaf to be turned in that old *Atlantic*.

That winter's evening in the dusky twilight the fire-illuminated page soon took on prismatic colors, seen through my fast-gathering tears. When we came to the place in the story where Nolan, reading aloud, had to read

"Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said
'This is my own, my native land'!"

"the big round tears cours'd one another down my innocent nose," and from there on to the end of the story, the great tears of childhood splashed intermittently on the pages.

Several years ago the editor of one of the magazines had people send to him their lists of the ten best short stories. Of the thousands of lists sent in nearly every one contained "The Man without a Country." How could it have been otherwise, if to each one of the makers of those lists that story was an integral part of his own childhood? My own list had in it four of the old *Atlantic* stories; the three others were "My Double, and how he undid me," "In a Cellar," and "Marjorie Daw."

Not all my recollections of the old *Atlantics* have for their background the fire-lit sitting-room. In summer my favorite reading place was the old saw-mill. This stood by the river about four or five rods from home, and was so built that most of it stood out over the

running water. Between it and the house was the log yard, where the great logs lay waiting their turn at the saw. Going over to the saw-mill there was always room to find a pathway in amongst the logs; but I preferred the "overland route," jumping from one log to another.

One end of the long low building was open; and one lying here on the sunlit boards, looking up from one's reading, could see far off down the river where it swung in a great curve, with the hemlock trees climbing up to the top of its steep bank on one side, and with the low willows fringing the wide level meadow on the other side.

The floor of the old mill was not laid with matched boards, and through the great cracks between the boards, as one lay on the rough floor face downwards, reading, one caught the flash of the running water far beneath.

The water-driven, vertical saw, slowly slicing up the great logs into slabs, did not have the angry "zip, zip" of the circular saw, but a droning sound that blended with that of the rushing water, deepening the murmur.

The echoes of the Civil War had scarcely died away throughout the land, and the thrill of its courage and devotion stirred the responsive heart of childhood. I could dimly remember the home-coming of my father from the war, and had slowly learned to realize that the young uncle who had been our playmate and companion would never return. So the old *Atlantics* opened almost of themselves to Whittier's "Barbara Frietchie," Julia Ward Howe's "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and Longfellow's "The Cumberland."

Of them all the little girl liked "Barbara Frietchie" the best. Lying there reading on the sunlit boards, with the reflections from the running water below dancing on walls and ceiling, the girl consciously saw none of these things. She saw instead the streets of Fredericktown, with Stonewall Jackson riding at the head of the rebel troops, and The Flag flying

from the empty attic window over them.

But unconsciously she must have noted it all. Far in the dusky interior of the old mill aslant its dimness fell a shaft of mottled golden light from its one western window. The woman to-day finds herself unable to keep separate in her consciousness this real window of the mill from that attic window of the poem; and, in defiance of time and space, that shaft of golden dusky light falls on the upturned faces of Stonewall's men.

Both "Barbara Frietchie" and "The Cumberland" have in them one moment of high dramatic action. I do not think young children appreciate silent heroism; they like best the bold defiance of speech and of action: so Barbara Frietchie's "Shoot if you must this old gray head," and the commander of the Cumberland's "It is better to sink than to yield," found their true place in the girl's heart beside that one line of *Marmion*, "The hand of Douglas is his own."

"The Battle Hymn of the Republic" has in it no one speech of open defiance, but is full of deep, strong reverberations like those of distant thunder among low hills. It is said that no one has ever truly heard that poem who has not heard it sung by a regiment of armed men; the tread of their marching feet being its one true accompaniment.

I cannot tell, I have never so heard it; the poem repeats itself in my mind to the deep throbs of great masses of plunging water. Part of the old saw-mill was built out over the dam; and, when the river ran high in the spring, the volume of water was so great that it fell in one smooth unbroken wall from the top of the dam into the deep pool below. Even the great timbers of the old mill shook with its vibration. The flying spray flung up from the pool far below sometimes reached the girl, who on the outermost pile of lumber half read to herself, half chanted aloud, the Battle Hymn.

One other poem of the old *Atlantics*, Robert Lowell's "Relief of Lucknow," connects itself with those days, though

it had nothing to do with the Civil War except as all deeds of heroism naturally belonged with it. That poem seemed to pick out of the murmurous undertone of sound in the old mill, and take for its own, the sound of the steel teeth of the saw forcing their way through the great logs. I think the poem must have laid claim to the droning sound of the saw by virtue of the kinship between that sound and the sound of the bagpipes of the rescuers in the poem.

In one of the late *Atlantics* there is a poem, "The Book Lover," in praise of the all-sufficingness of a book. The author speaks of himself as perched in some window-seat, or as in the alcove of a great library, or as being seated by the home fireside. He says of himself in each and all of these places —

"For happiness I need not look
Beyond the pages of my book."

He even says that he would be happy stowed away on a shelf, if a beloved book were stowed away with him.

That may be true for Mr. Scollard, but for my own self, full half the charm of those poems in the old *Atlantics* came from the sights and sounds amongst which they were read. They would not stand for what they do in my life if it had not been for my reading-place in the old mill.

I still think there could have been no other reading-place equal to it. The sun came in at the open southern end, and lay warm and still on the rough board floor; cool breezes blew out of its dim interior from the far-away open northern end, bringing with them the drone of the saw and the clean smell of fresh lumber and fresh sawdust; and up from below and in at every side came the murmur and flash of running water.

The girl so loved this reading-place that she came out to it to read on the occasional sunshiny March day, when the branches of the willows that fringed the level meadow at the curve of the river were showing the coming of spring in their deepened yellow color; and she

kept coming until sometimes the page was darkened by a sudden flurry of November snow; and, looking up from her reading, she could not see the pointed tops of the hemlocks that crowned the river bluff.

There is convincing proof that the girl who read there was not a creature all compact of sensibility to poetry and to murmuring sound, but was indeed of most veritable flesh and blood. In one of the old *Atlantics*, opposite the page on which is "The Cumberland," there are unmistakable marks of bread-and-butter fingers, and there is also a dull brownish-red stain that must once have been jam. I only hope that that prosaic record enrolls me with Goethe's Charlotte, who, according to Thackeray, in the very crucial moment of the tragedy when Werther's body was borne past her, "went on cutting bread and butter." However that may be, no other page of the old *Atlantics* is so dear to the woman as the one that bears these childish marks.

Doubtless for grown-up people it is more convenient to have one's old *Atlantics* bound; but, if ours had been bound and had stood in a formal row on the book-shelves, instead of lying unbound in the old secretary, we children would never have so burrowed in amongst them, and have lived so intimately with them as we did. Heavy bound volumes would not so easily have lain open on the sitting-room floor, nor would they so readily have lent themselves to transportation across the logs to the saw-mill.

The years come and go, until the sisters now have come into the midst of their teens; but the contents of the drawers of the old secretary have neither been outgrown nor exhausted. The old familiar stories and poems are being read over and over again, and new treasures are being found in the old magazines. Now it is "Dorothy Q.," Stedman's "The Doorstep," Nora Perry's "After the Ball," that are being learned by heart and dreamed over. These new poems

have not driven out of our hearts the old war poems, but have fitted down beside these into their own true place in the widening life of girlhood. The old mill is still my reading-place, and despite the dignity of sixteen years, I go out to it by the old "overland route."

On warm midsummer afternoons when the water was so low that the mill could not run, the murmur of the shallow water from the shrunken bed of the river below hardly reached up to me; a slumberous stillness brooded over the whole place; and the smell of the newly sawed lumber in the hot sunshine seemed to fill full all the silent place, left empty of sound.

On such an afternoon, when I read in Helen Hunt's "Coronation" of those filmy nets of sun woven by the subtle noon at the king's gates, into whose drowsy snare the king's guards fell, before my very eyes in the old mill were those same subtle, yellow nets being woven, only no king's guards were being ensnared by them. They had caught and were holding all the forest odors that had been stored up in the great logs, and, having been set free by the saw, were now again imprisoned.

But we sisters now were beginning to read articles that were neither stories nor poems. One such article stands out in my mind as marking the destruction of a childhood's belief. Children are firm believers in the power of absolute justice; right is always triumphant in their creed. My first view of there being such a thing as triumphant injustice came to me through the old *Atlantic* article "The Fight of a Man with a Railroad."

As the result of that reading some of the foundations of the girl's thinking, some of her settled belief, gave way; a certain feeling of security went out of her life. She had never consciously known that she had these beliefs, they were so inherently a part of herself; but as she read the article, as the bitter knowledge that the power of a great corporation could make judges give unjust decisions, as the bitter knowledge that you might have

wrongs and you could get no redress of them, as the bitterness of weakness at the mercy of unrestrained strength, as these all came home to her, blank bewilderment came with them.

Her childhood conception of Law as being a great powerful something that kept any one from doing you an injury; or, if the injury had been done, punished the one who did it and kept him from doing it again, was doubtless very crude; yet it looks to the woman to-day as if the gist of the whole matter were in it. If men can feel that back of all their separate and often conflicting interests there is a power to which they may appeal to protect these interests in so far as they should be protected, and that this power is stronger than the strongest man or combination of men, and that its decisions are incorruptible, then you have the rock foundation on which society, civilization, and government may rest.

The girl read this article at home on a certain evening; by some irony of fate, at school on the morning of that very day, her English history lesson had been on the Magna Carta.

The barbarous mediæval Latin of the fortieth clause of the Great Charter, "Nulli vendemus, nulli negabimus, aut differemus rectum aut justitiam," took on strange interpretations read by the light of the facts in that article. There in her history textbook stood the fortieth clause of the Great Charter, "To none will we sell, to none will we deny, to none will we delay either right or justice;" and there in the old *Atlantic* stood the record of a law trial in an American court, with its bought judges, its delayed and denied justice.

It would need a larger brain than that of the sixteen-year-old girl to take in, within less than twenty-four hours, that clause and that law trial, and not have them jostle each other.

Was it Lowell who said, "The more we know of ancient literature, the more we are struck with its modernness"? Well, the more we read the old *Atlantics*,

the more we recognize that the questions raised there so long ago are the live questions of to-day. Here are two of the questions raised in that old article on the fight with the railroad: "Are the railroads and the courts the masters or the servants of the people who pay for both?" "Does the public intend deliberately to tax itself enormously through the railroads for a common service so that a few favored individuals may become inordinately arrogant and rich?"

If these two questions had appeared in any leading magazine or newspaper in this last month, all that would have excited surprise in the questions would have been the clearness with which they were put, and the directness with which they go at the heart of the problem; yet the *Atlantic* in which they appeared bears date of December, 1872.

Mr. Coleman, the author, speaking of the fight, says, "My fight is still going on, and I trust it will continue till the insolence of these railroad corporations is curbed, and they are taught their single and true function, that of common carriers for the sovereign people." One wonders if throughout the thirty-five years since the article was written Mr. Coleman has continued to fight the good fight and is to-day a veteran in the ranks; or did he long ago become discouraged at the difficulty of teaching the railroads that lesson and give it all up? or, for in thirty-five years much may happen, did he die in the midst of the battle, still fighting?

We hear now on all sides the term "robber barons" applied to some of the great capitalists. When it began to be generally so applied several years ago it had to my ears an oddly familiar sound. Suddenly it flashed upon me one day where I had heard it, and I turned to the old *Atlantics*. There stood this sentence in the issue for August, 1870: "The old robber barons of the Middle Ages who plundered sword in hand and lance in rest were more honest than this new aristocracy of swindling millionaires."

It is a little difficult for those who were brought up on the *Atlantic Monthly* not to have a half-resentful feeling when all the world comes round to adopting ideas and expressions which they and their magazine have shared together. One laughs at one's self for the feeling, one recognizes the inherent snobbishness and littleness of it, but it is there.

On the *lucus a non lucendo* principle the following incident belongs with this record, although the very point involved is, — the not being in an old *Atlantic*. The night before, my sister and I had been out to a party, and in the morning we were wakened by our father calling,—

"Slug-a-beds, are n't you ever coming down?"

To our laughing reply of "Never," came back "Then I'm coming up," and in a moment father came into the room with a magazine in his hand.

"This came last evening after you were gone, and I want you to hear this poem."

Then father began to read aloud to us Longfellow's "Morituri Salutamus." On our ears fell, in our father's voice (I have never known any one who read aloud so well), that wonderful opening of the poem:—

"O Cæsar, we who are about to die
Salute you!' was the gladiators' cry
In the arena, standing face to face
With death and with the Roman populace."

When father finished reading, in the hush that followed I reached out my hand for the magazine, and — it was n't the *Atlantic*.

That Longfellow, or Holmes, or Lowell, or Emerson, or Whittier ever wrote for any other magazine had simply never occurred to me as being among the possibilities. If any one had suggested such a thing I would have indignantly denied it; but there before my eyes lay the evidence of Longfellow's treachery. During my father's reading I had felt the beauty and the pathos of the poem, but I never read it again until I read it in a regular edition of Longfellow's poems wherein no trace of that hated rival magazine appeared.

I, who to-day am older than my father was then, have learned by the years that lie between how noble the poem is in its courageous acceptance both of the work that the old may undertake and of the limitations of that work. And yet even now between me and the beauty of the poem lies the shadow of the fact that it did not come out in the *Atlantic*.

THE WRITER AND THE UNIVERSITY

BY WALTER H. PAGE

I

I WRITE this paper to show, if I can, why men and women who propose to write for a living ought to have the benefit of professional training, as men and women may now have professional training who propose to practice any other art; why post-graduate professional schools for writers at our universities would make good writing more common, by dignifying and improving the everyday practice of the art; why such schools of practice, vigorously conducted, would give new life also to the literary studies in our universities; and why they would, I think, make more common among the educated class a good use of both written and spoken language.

I may prevent confusion of thought by saying at the outset that I am not now writing about what the schoolmen usually call literature, nor about men and women of "genius." I am writing only about those who write every day or every week for their livelihood, and about what we generally call current literature. I pray you before reading farther, then, to set aside in a special class all young persons whose writings you are sure will be read with joy fifty years hence, or even five years hence; for they, I grant, may be pardoned for ignoring teachers. Nor have I anything to say about those persons who have contracted the divine afflatus, nor those for whom "professors of English" predict brilliant careers because they have written excellent undergraduate themes. I have in mind only the big volume of writing that is done every day in the United States by journeymen writers, and the need of training us to do our work better, us who regard our trade as an honest and diffi-

cult occupation at which we wish to excel.

Such journeymen's writing has now come to be an important trade for several reasons. In the first place, journeymen writers write almost everything that the American people read. They write our advertisements; they write our newspapers; they write our magazines; they write our novels; they write our scientific books; they write travels and adventures for us; they write our histories and biographies; they write our textbooks, — all our books of instruction from almanacs to encyclopædias. Leaving out the reading that is done by a small class and that done by students chiefly during the period of formal education, most of the writing that is read in the United States is written by persons who write for a living; most of it was written during the last few years, much of it within the last year, much of it, in fact, within the last month, and a good deal of it was written yesterday. The journeymen writers write almost all that almost all Americans read. This is a fact that we love to fool ourselves about. We talk about "literature" and we talk about "hack writers," implying that the reading that we do is of literature. The truth all the while is, we read little else than the writing of the hacks, — living hacks, that is, men and women who write for pay. We may hug the notion that our life and thought are not really affected by current literature, that we read the living writers only for utilitarian reasons, and that our real intellectual life is fed by the great dead writers. But our hugging this delusion does not change the fact that the intellectual life even of most educated persons, and certainly of the mass of the population, is fed chiefly by the writers of our

own time. Let us hope that the great writers of the past do set the standards whereby a few judge the writing of the present. But, even if this be true, it is still true also that the intellectual life of the American people is chiefly shaped by current writing.

And the writers' craft is now become a very large craft. In numbers it ranks perhaps second or third among the professions. There are more teachers and possibly more lawyers than there are persons who make their living wholly or in the main part by writing; and possibly there are as many physicians. But, if you could count the reporters and correspondents, the special writers for the newspapers, the makers of textbooks, the writers for magazines, the novelists, the playwrights, the writers of governmental and other public documents, and all the rest who make their living wholly or in the main part by writing, you would be astonished to see how large a company they are.

The craft has come to be a fairly well paid craft, too. No writers make such great fortunes as some lawyers, nor even such fortunes as some physicians and surgeons make; but many of them make more money than most lawyers and most physicians; and they are better paid than teachers and preachers. By sheer economic demand, therefore, writing as a career is attracting as capable men and women as most of the other professions and almost as many of them as any other. It is an interesting fact, too, that the earnings of writers during the last twenty years have increased faster than the earnings of most of the other professions. The writers of current literature, then, form a craft influential enough, big enough, and well enough paid to deserve as careful training as those who ply the other trades which we usually call professions.

Regarding the skill and character of current writers, it is probable that they fall below the level of lawyers in the excellence of their craftsmanship, but not in

the character that their work shows, and that they do no better than physicians and perhaps as badly as teachers and preachers. Of course they ought to do a great deal better than teachers or preachers, because they both teach and preach to all the people all the time, and not merely on Sundays or during the period of school age. Newspaper writing, of course, runs from very good to very bad. The most important part of it, which is the reporter's part, is generally very bad. Magazine writing is just shaping itself into a craft. Until a few years ago it was a side-product of scholars and men of action. Most of it was then very proper and stilted, just as much of it now imitates the vices of the newspaper. The American magazine is just finding its power and its opportunity, and shaping its character to definite ends. It is become the most influential form of current literature, and the chance that it offers for strong men is just beginning to be understood.

Concerning current book-writing, it is true, I suppose, that our best novelists are, as a rule, the best writers of our time, just as our worst novelists are the worst. The average quality of writing in current books is probably higher than the average was a generation ago, and surely a very much larger number of persons write reasonably well than ever before. But is it not fair to say that a general view of the whole mass of new books that come out year by year would show that as a rule our book writers do not do a high grade of work? The most common fault is a lack of form, of orderliness, and of construction. A certain verbal smartness is very common, but the careful construction of books is rare.

There are two great departments of current literature that are very badly written. One is what may be called the literature of reports and documents, — from commercial reports to governmental documents. The waste in printing these, if it could be saved, would be enough, I am sure, richly to endow a professional

school of writing at half the colleges in the land. So badly are governmental reports and documents written, as a rule, that the public seldom finds out what the government, municipal, state, or national, is doing. This is one cause of bad political conditions. Large amounts of money are spent to gather useful information which is so ill told that it remains practically unknown. The national government, for instance, through all its departments and bureaus at Washington, prints an incalculable mass of things at an enormous cost, which it cannot give away because they are so ill written that nobody wants them. Nothing is gained by this waste of labor and of paper, and yet nobody seems able to stop it or to change the "system," or even to induce those in authority to employ men to edit such of these reports as might be read if they were written with common intelligibility.

The other department of current literature that is such "tough" reading that much of it is valueless is the work of academic men, the publications of many societies, the monographs and "theses" and "studies" of teachers and students of our universities, — books on science, on historical subjects, even on politics and sociology, which fail of their purpose because they are written without form or style. Some of our academic men go on year after year piling up these unreadable things, as the government writers go on piling up their unreadable things; and the habit has become so fixed that they are even held in esteem for writing unintelligibly. The public is asked to believe that learning makes unintelligibility necessary.

A professor of English literature in one of our universities once brought to me to publish in this magazine such a learned piece of writing. It seemed to me a pretty dull thing and not important, according to my judgment, to anybody, and not possibly interesting to more than a handful of special students. I wrote him this opinion as politely as I could. He came to see me again and smilingly took me

into his confidence. "I hardly expected," he said, "that you would publish that 'study' that I offered you. In fact, I care little about it myself. I wrote it because my professional standing demands that I shall produce something at certain intervals. But now I have a piece of writing that I do take great pride in, and I want you to publish it without betraying the authorship to any living being. It would hurt my professional standing if it became known that I wrote this." It was a novel!

Well, Scott wrote novels, and Thackeray, and Goethe, and Turgénieff, and some great writers of every modern nation that has a literature. It is truly often a much debased form of literature in our day, but the most powerful living form for all that; and that a professor of English literature should assume an apologetic attitude toward it sets a plain journeyman to thinking. His dissertation was published in one of the learned organs of his university and duly catalogued by title, by subject, and by author in the library. His novel has, so far as I know, never been published. Of course any editor or any publisher could tell dozens of such experiences to illustrate how in a didactic and critical atmosphere a man is forced against his will to compile burdensome erudition that is of no value, and is permitted by the false feeling about him to try his imagination and creative powers only as a secret pleasure. The tragedy of it is, such a man does not become either a great scholar or a tolerable novelist. In the first place, he never learns even the fundamental graces of an English style.

To return to our poor craft of journeyman writers, — please regard us all as a class, as a craft, as a profession (call us what you will). Think of writers for newspapers, for magazines, writers of governmental reports, of advertisements, of novels, of books of information, poets, — all who make it their business to write and who earn all or part of their incomes by writing; think of us all, if you can, as you think of any other class of workers, —

physicians, or teachers, or architects, for examples. You will discover that there is one great difference between your conception of writers and your conception of physicians. Although you know that there are all kinds of physicians, good and bad, when I say that a man is a physician, that fact at once classifies him in your mind, no matter how many incompetent physicians there are. You take it for granted that he has been trained at a school of medicine, that he practices his profession in an orderly way, that he has a certain definite body of knowledge and a certain minimum degree of skill. He may be a skillful or an unskillful physician. But the bare fact that he is a member of the profession means something. But, when I say that a man is a writer, what does that convey to any mind? an impertinent newspaper reporter, or a gutter novelist, or a historian, or a professor in a university? You get no clear-cut notion at all; and you say that there is no such profession of writing as there is of physicking people, or of teaching them, or of preaching to them, or of building houses for them. Yet as many persons earn their livings by writing as by practicing medicine, and they serve society in quite as important ways. There was a time, not very long ago, when professional training was not thought necessary, or at least was not provided, for the other professions. The barber bled his patient. The young lawyer "read law" in the office of an older lawyer. The engineer learned his trade in any way he could. Even now the teacher is just coming to have a professional standing and consciousness. All these callings gradually came to have a definite relation to society and some dignity of position by special professional training. As soon as opportunities for such special professional training were given, a definite body of knowledge and a definite degree of skill were required of the best practitioners. Quacks and incompetents yet flourish, and they always will. Still, medical schools and pedagogical schools find justification,

and they keep raising the standard of knowledge and of skill. Professional writers have yet no standard or standing, as a class. Why could their profession not profit by the experience of these others?

The successful practice of the writer's craft, whether as a novelist, a reporter, an historian, a writer of advertisements or what not, surely requires a degree of experience and professional skill. Yet our educational institutions do not seem to be aware of this fact. For instance, a little while ago I received a letter from the president of a college asking me to give "magazine writing" to a gentlewoman of cultivation who had been overtaken by misfortune. If he had asked me to get her a place in grand opera, he would not have made a more absurd request. Every year a procession of young men and women comes from the colleges to the newspaper offices, the publishing houses, and the magazine offices, who wish to make their living by writing. Many of them bring pathetically simple letters from their professors of English. They are ready to begin to instruct or to amuse the nation, and the professors predict great things for them. Sometimes, in utter despair, we who work at current literature with hammers and anvils say to them, "Well, you wish to write?"

"Yes."

"Go and write, then; nobody will hinder you. We will buy your writing and publish it if it be good enough."

"Oh, but I wish to learn."

"Well, we are sorry, but we don't keep school. We must deal in finished products."

They must serve, of course, a long apprenticeship and then fall short of doing as well as they could have been taught to do; for the masters to whom they are apprenticed have no time, even if they have the skill, to teach them systematically. They pick up the tricks of the craft rather than learn its principles; and in this harum-scarum, untrained way they come in time to write perhaps half the matter that the American people

read. Then these same professors of English, and suchlike gentlemen, who do not themselves write, complain that our newspapers and magazines and novels are ill written.

Nor is even this the worst of it. Most of the young men who come thus raw into the trade come with high aims; they have literary standards; they have worthy ambitions. But they soon discover that the trade is not the making of "literature." They have not been prepared by a reasonable amount of practice even to understand what writing, day by day, means. They have their heads full of "literary" notions, which are, as a rule, very false notions. They are not prepared for the orderly practice of a useful art. They hope rather to do some great piece of work quickly. They are in a false relation to work and to life. When the inevitable disillusion comes, they either lose ambition and sink into hopeless drudgery, or they lose their bearings and run off into "yellow" journalism, where they can at least do spectacular jobs and earn (for a little while) more money.

Thus, although many capable and ambitious youths come to the doors of the writers' workshops, so few of them are properly prepared to begin work or even look upon it in a proper way,—as young physicians look upon their work, or as young lawyers, or as young architects,—so few come with proper preparation or in the proper state of mind, that the demand for honest, capable, trained journeymen writers is not supplied. Every editor of a magazine, every editor of an earnest and worthy newspaper, every publisher of books, has dozens or hundreds of important tasks for which he cannot find capable men: tasks that require scholarship, knowledge of science, or of politics, or of industry, or of literature, along with experience in writing accurately in the language of the people. The profession is yet a harum-scarum, rough-and-tumble business into which men and women come chiefly from our universities, with academic superstitions

instead of principles; and every one has to blaze his own way. And this in a democracy where public opinion rules congresses and presidents and courts, and where the machinery for the proper training of men, one would think, would be especially adjusted to the training of those who are to write the public journals, adjusted to training at once the judgment and the style of men who are to write; for even style requires most excellent good judgment.

We complain, and we complain justly, of the commercialization of the press and, to a degree, of all current literature. And it would be strange if it had escaped commercialization in this rush of industrialism which is the most striking fact of our time; for all the professions have to some extent suffered the same misfortune. But, if the press is commercialized, it is not the writers who have commercialized it. They are the victims of this commercialization. We have left the writing to be done by those who lack the strength and the skill that come from good training, and the forces of commercialism have found many of them easy victims. For most men when they set out to write set out with high aims. The first impulse that drives men to their pens is usually a noble impulse. They wish to teach their fellows. They wish to win names for themselves. They wish to exert a good influence. When they succumb they succumb because they are weak rather than because they are depraved. Yet the strong man who can write well is the man of real power. He can capture and command the machinery of publicity. If, then, this great machinery of publicity is controlled and used too much by sheer commercial men, this has come to pass because strong men have not been trained as good writers. Is it not true, then, that our universities, which are justly offended at the commercialization of current literature, have failed of their duty to prevent it?

For the usual undergraduate practice of composition and study of the English

language and literature, good enough as far as they go, go little farther toward training a boy for writing than the usual undergraduate courses in mathematics go toward training him as an astronomer or as an engineer. Nor can undergraduate work do more. There is not time to do more. Nor has the undergraduate sufficient maturity to learn more than the rudiments of so difficult an art.

II

A proper course of practice and study for such a professional post-graduate school could be prepared only by men who are both good writers and good teachers, and only after some experience. But the general principles that should guide them are obvious. No student ought to be admitted who has not such a "general education" and such maturity as an A. B. degree implies; and only such students ought to be admitted as mean to make their living and their careers by writing, and only such as show some aptitude for the art, some facility of expression, some love of the right use of speech, and who get joy from its right use.

The teachers in such a professional school ought to be scholars in literature and men who have a good sense of right speech; men, too, who are themselves writers of some degree of skill, not mere lecturers, and not mere scholars. Writing is an art, and the teaching would be too theoretical if it were done by men who are not themselves practitioners of the art, just as the teaching of painting would be too theoretical that should be done by men who cannot paint fairly well themselves. No man can write well who has not written a good deal; and I doubt whether a man could be a successful teacher of good writing who had not written much.

The main work in such a school would be practice, just as the main work in a school for painters or sculptors or musicians must be practice. We should have to throw away at the gate the notion that

mere scholarship is a sufficient equipment for a successful writer. For scholarship alone never made a good writer; nor did reading alone ever make one, however close and loving communion a man may have with great writers. This fallacy lingers in our academic life as stubbornly as the dogma of the divine afflatus itself.

Suppose every student were required to write a thousand words a day,—for a time narrative, such as a biography or a bit of history; then description, then argument, then a novel, then a play, then for a time, instead of tasks in prose, a sonnet a day or practice in other forms of verse. A student who should write a thousand words a day would in a year of three hundred working days gain such practice as the writing of three books of the usual size of a novel would give. In three years he would have written as much as nine such books contain. Of course, his writing would every day have to undergo the criticism of his teacher and of his fellows. No teacher could properly have more than half a dozen students, and the teacher himself ought to write as much as any of his students. They ought, at times at least, to write together, and about the same subjects. Doubtless it would be helpful, as Robert Louis Stevenson found it helpful, sometimes to write in conscious imitation of great writers, one after another.

Of course, there must go along with this practice definite, well-planned courses of post-graduate study in language and in literature. In most post-graduate work that I know of in the United States such studies now take the direction given by the philologists or the historians. Theirs is a science, not an art. The results of philological study are necessary for a good writer; but, if he get himself deeply entangled in philology for its own sake, he may become a great scholar, but the chances are that he will never learn the art of writing. To the philologist a word is material for historical study. To a writer a word is an instrument of

expression, a tool. He must know his tools well to use them well, but he cannot give himself to the study of the history of tools. The same may be said of the historical study of literature. Of the great literature itself no writer who wishes to do his best can be ignorant. He must steep himself in it. He must continue to live with it; for no man can write his best who does not read great writers constantly. He will gain incalculably, too, if he can read the ancient as well as the modern.

By the time a young man, in such a post-graduate school, had written the equivalent of eight or ten books in prose and verse, under the guidance of a master who had himself written perhaps as much, and with the criticism of his fellows, and had in the meantime also constantly read masters of style, he would at least know whether the writing life is likely to offer the career that he seeks and whether the divine afflatus blows toward him. He would have shown some degree of earnestness; he would have worked out certain definite principles of the craft; he would have acquired a certain degree of skill as an artificer in words and in the orderly arrangement of thought; and he would be likely to begin the practice of the craft with a clearer understanding than he had when he began his professional training, of what the career that he has chosen demands of a man,—in resolution, in ideals, in practice, and in character. And this also surely is true: for them that are fitted by temperament and by capacity for such a calling, these years of training the productive faculties, these years of progressive effort at creation, would be happy and inspiring years. I have never known a successful and earnest writer of current literature who did not wish that he had had such training.

Indeed, it is hard to understand why such schools were not long ago opened at our universities. Those who write for their living are the only large class of skilled workmen for whom professional schools are not provided. Our universi-

ties train men not only for the old professions, but they train them to be dentists, pharmacists, foresters, veterinarians, and sociologists. Although nobody supposes that a boy as soon as he finishes his undergraduate life is prepared to begin work at any of these callings, he is supposed even by our educational masters to be prepared to begin work as a writer. These youth surely have as good a claim to professional training as those who wish to practice these other professions. Nor is there any doubt about the demand for such training. Any university that should open such a professional school with well-equipped teachers would have more applicants than the school could properly receive; and, after any one of our principal universities establishes such a school, others will soon follow the example. The demand for those young men, too, in the working world, who had creditably finished a three-years' course in such a school would far outrun the supply for many years to come.

III

There are other reasons for post-graduate, professional practice-schools for young scholars who wish to learn to write, and even stronger reasons than those that I have named. For so far I have written only of the needs of the writing craft. But do our universities themselves not need such schools for their own sake and for the better adjustment of their work and influence to our democratic society?

The dominant method of training in the university work of our time is by research. The higher academic degrees are given for research work. Men are chosen for college faculties who have won these higher degrees. Their mental habit and their methods of teaching are shaped by this method of training. This is the right method of acquiring facts and of acquiring skill in acquiring facts, for it is the scientific method. But, while it is the proper method for scientific work and

training, it is not the proper method for the teaching of an art. You cannot apply it to painting, to sculpture, to music, or to the great art of writing.

But the method of training by research has so dominated our university activity that the teaching of the arts has been neglected. Our higher teaching of English has run to philology; our higher teaching of literature has run to such tasks as the tracing of mediæval legends from one language to another. These are scientific pursuits; and one result of their domination of university methods is a neglect of the art of expression, even a sort of contempt for it. You will find this contempt in our schools of science. A scientific man who can write well, — write, I mean, in language that everybody can understand, — is looked at by his fellows with suspicion. He is considered a "popularizer," a man who plays to the galleries. It is not considered good form to write well. It is a mark of weakness to cultivate style, or to think about methods of expression, except to make sure of accuracy.

We can see how this neglectful attitude toward good writing has worked sad harm to many of our historical students, for example. There have been published during the last ten or fifteen years a large number of books about the history of the United States, most of them by historical scholars who work in our colleges and universities. They are historical investigators, scientific men. Their first aim — and it is properly the first aim of any man who has to do with history — is to make sure of accuracy, to trace every statement to an original source. So far so good. But when they come to writing history they come to a task of another kind. So long as they are investigating facts it is proper and necessary that every fact should be set down in a row in its proper relation to every fact that comes before and to every fact that goes after it, and then put into a chain. In investigation one fact is of as much importance as any other fact, and

a chain is no stronger than its weakest link.

But, as soon as the writing of history begins, one fact is no longer of as much importance as another fact. It is still necessary to be accurate, and no fact may be set down wrong. But sheer accuracy is not enough to make a good narrative. To make a good narrative is an art. The historical investigator must now become an artist. He must not give all his facts equal emphasis. He cannot even use all his facts. For a work of art is often made effective quite as much by what is left out of it as by what is put into it.

But many of our historical students hold the art of expression in almost as low esteem as other scientific men hold it. They think it a mark of weakness to try to write well. They regard it as their sole business to be accurate. They do not regard it as their business to be graceful. They do not understand that the task that they have in hand as writers of history is an artistic and not a scientific task. They do not see that they must now make pictures, — produce artistic effects. They ought not, as historical writers, to be making mere chains of their facts. They ought to group them, putting a strong emphasis on the big facts, a light emphasis on the little facts. They must have a strong light here, a shadow there. They must relieve their narrative by descriptions. They must put men into their procession of events. The reader must understand the historical characters that he reads about, and see them as clearly as we see men in the best portraits. He must hear them talk and come to know them. The writing of history is not a scientific pursuit: it is an artistic task.

Thus (I hope that I do not write too harsh a judgment) the art of writing well has come to be much neglected in our educational life; its value has come to be misunderstood. It has, to a degree, even come to be despised. So far from being cultivated, except in rudimentary undergraduate work, it is left almost to take

care of itself. The result is slovenly expressed erudition. The result is a too low value set on good speech or good writing even by the educated class. The result is a great gap between our scholars and the rest of the community. The result is that men of learning do not deliver to the people the knowledge that is gained by science and by historical study. The result is a detachment of our universities from the life of the people, and their loss of control and even of authority over the intellectual life of the nation; for the medium of communication is neglected.

We hear much of the cultural value of this study or of that. No subject has a very great cultural value that is studied in a dumb way; for is the art of expression not the basis as well as the medium of the best culture? If the best method of acquiring facts is the method of research, surely the best method of acquiring culture, of acquiring skill in any art, the best method of developing a man for creative (and not merely acquisitive) work is the method of practice, and not exclusively the method of investigation nor yet the method of criticism,—I mean that kind of criticism which men try to exalt into a department of literature, as it is not and never can be.

After a man has written a book and published it, criticism of it seldom helps him, unless he have made errors of fact that may be corrected. Helpful criticism is a personal and friendly and intimate service that can be best done in private; and public criticism usually hardens a writer in his wrong ways by arousing his resentment. The idea that mere criticism of literature will set up a standard whereby men will do their own work well is fallacious; for any standard so wrought out and set up soon becomes remote and theoretical, if it be disassociated from practice. It is at best a sort of secondhand knowledge. It does little to lift the level of the achievement of young men themselves. The time to criticise writing, for artistic improvement, is before it is published; and the

only criticism that helps a man to write better is his own criticism and that of fellow workmen while he is still writing. Yet it is chiefly by such criticism or by the criticism of literature in general that our universities seek to train youth in literature. If the energy and the subtlety that are given to the criticism of dead writers — in the vain effort to make criticism a living part of literature — were spent in efforts at production (teachers and pupils writing together and severely criticising one another as they write), a working and inspiring standard in production would be set up.

Moreover (and this is the most serious matter of all), where literature is taught by the historical method and by the critical method and by the method of research, to the practical exclusion of the method of severe and continuous practice in writing, — in such an intellectual atmosphere the feeling grows and becomes at last a conviction, that literature is a closed chapter of human experience, and that it has all been written; and men forget — young men do not even find out — that literature is a continuous expression of every phase of human experience in every period, that it must be continuous, that every generation must contribute to it, ill or well, whether it know it or not; that literature must be written in the present and in the future, and that no man can tell when a great outburst of it will come, or who will write it, or what forms it will take, or whether it will even be recognized when it appears. Youth in our training do not have that feeling of expectancy in literature, that bounding hope, which youth ought to have as a right of its eagerness of spirit; for we do not whet their minds for actual experiment with their own creative impulses. Do we not rather overawe them with the greatness of the past and discourage them by hopelessness of the present? Such is the inevitable intellectual result of exalting the function of those useful drudges, the commentator and the critic, over the creative impulse itself.

Vigorous efforts in the practice of any art are necessary to keep alive a keen appreciation of that art. Vigorous efforts to do good writing are necessary to implant and to keep really alive a proper appreciation of great literature. This is, in fact, the only way to teach or to study great literature so as to make it a vital and not a mere theoretical force in men's lives, — the only way to keep the stream of literature flowing clear and strong, the only way to keep alive the consciousness that it flows all the time, shallow or deep, muddy or clear, do what we will. For men study most lovingly and profoundly what they themselves wish to do or to imitate or to live by.

Thus a plea for the training of the poor, honest "hack" leads to a plea for a more vigorous and direct study of literature in our universities, study by sustained practice, which is the counterpart of the study of science by research. For the study of literature — of the "humanities" — does it not need invigorating? Is not the imitation by our teachers of literature of the more vigorous scientific men a confession of a lapse from the place that they once held in the training of youth? Have they not lost something of their rightful influence in making "educated" men cultivated men and in keeping alive among the educated class a proper appreciation of good literature? And has this loss of influence of the "cultural" studies not had much to do with the neglect both of good speech and of good writing by this generation of Americans? And has this in turn not made the way easier for all the spectacular quacks in current literature? And has this loss of literary power not come because our teachers of literature have forsaken the high laborious method of practice and substituted for it the scientific teacher's method of research?

I verily believe that vigorous post-graduate schools for the professional training of writers would attract a number of our most capable youth, would put a new life into literary study at our col-

leges, by setting up a high working standard instead of merely theoretical standards, would lift the practice and dignify the calling of the professional writer, and would bring our academic life into a more helpful relation to the production of literature and build up the speech of the people. It might again become the mark of an educated American gentleman that he should write well, and a test of an American scholar that he should be more than a vast, dumb Teutonic voracity, — be also a man of some gifts and graces in the democracy in which he lives, a democracy whose intellectual masters yet are masters of the people's speech.

IV

Of course there are objections and difficulties. Many educated men do not believe that good writing can be taught by any such direct effort. The style is the man. Therefore, as the man is, so will his style be. This is the same as to say that you need not bother with nature's handiwork. Those that are born to write need no teaching: those that are born unable to write cannot be taught. Old Divine Afflatus dies hard. Many contend, too, that the usual undergraduate theme work and the usual study of the old thing called Rhetoric are all that you can do in the way of direct aid to young writers. They maintain that you can teach men to write only by causing them to read the great masters of style. They think that it is wholly a question of intellectual breeding and association. Men who grow up with a knowledge of the great writers and learn to love good reading will, they say, learn to write well, at least as well as anybody could teach them. That objection is easy to answer. Simply gather your facts. Make a list of the best-read persons you know and set down opposite every name the writings of every one of them, and you will be surprised to find how few of them have written much, and even more surprised to find of how little importance to the world most

of the writing is that they have done.

The truth is, if the habit of merely acquiring knowledge be cultivated in the formative time of life, too much to the neglect of the faculties of creation and of expression, these faculties of expression become atrophied, and they are never used. We have all known scholarly men who talked all their lives of what they were soon going to write, and who went on acquiring but never wrote. I do not mean to say that the lives of such men were misspent; but I do mean to say that we cannot depend on such men to do our writing. Those whose acquisitive faculties only are used in their youth are likely to use only these same faculties in their manhood, and they seldom do creative work. They at best become commentators and expounders.

Another objection is that young men who are just out of college do not know anything to write about, that good writing requires knowledge and a good deal of experience of life. Yes, but these same young men who would gladly be trained to write will write without training; and surely a three years' course of practice and study would not leave them more ignorant of facts than it found them. It ought to strengthen their judgment and to train them in methods of acquiring facts while they are practicing their art.

It is said, too, that the teachers in such schools would come to be mere phrase-makers and rhetoricians. The man who teaches in such a post-graduate school ought to be the man of the greatest intellectual vigor that can be engaged; for of course he must teach not only writing but thinking as well, as every worthy

teacher of any subject must. This objection — that such schools will become schools of mere rhetoricians — means that both teachers and pupils will be weak and lazy. Why they should be weaker or lazier than the teachers and pupils of other schools is not plain.

But the most serious difficulty of all is that Americans lack the conception of writing as a teachable art, as the French, for instance, regard it. We regard the great writing of the past as the product of a sort of divine, unteachable gift, and the bad writing of the present as a poor utilitarian trade. We feel, therefore, that it is useless to try to train men who have supernatural gifts, if such men ever come again; and that it is beneath the dignity of universities, which train veterinarians and sociologists, to train men to do the slap-dash work of writing for a living. To change this point of view — that is the very gist of the problem.

The very purpose of such a proposal as I make is to cause young men to look upon writing as a useful art, an art in which men may be trained as they are trained in any other art, so that slap-dash journalism and all other bad writing may, at some time, cease to be tolerated, and so that those who write what all the people read shall be honestly trained craftsmen of the pen who do their work worthily. Then, I fancy, literature will really take care of itself. Surely it is true that whatever influence increases the skill and lifts the pride and the dignity of any craft, strengthens the character even of its strongest men and builds up the character even of its weakest men; and every such influence makes that craft a better force in the world.

ROSE MACLEOD¹

BY ALICE BROWN

IV

WHEN Peter went up the steps of his grandmother's house, he found Mrs. Grant still on the veranda, and Rose beside her. The girl looked at him eagerly, as if she besought him for whatever message he had, and he answered the glance with one warmed by implied sympathy. Until he saw her, he had not realized that anger made any part in the emotion roused in him by his imperial lady. Now he remembered how this gracious young creature seemed to him, so innocent, so sad. He felt a rising in his throat, as he thought of subjecting her to unfriendly judgment. Rose, in spite of the serious cast of her face and the repose of her figure, wore an ineffable air of youth. She had splendid shoulders and a yielding waist, and her fine hands lay like a separate beauty in the lap of her black dress. She had the profile of a coin touched with finer human graces, a fullness of the upper lip, a slight waving of the soft chestnut hair over the low forehead, and lashes too dark for harmony with the gray eyes. There were defects in her flawlessness. Her mouth was large, in spite of its pout, and on her nose were a few beguiling freckles. At that moment, in her wayward beauty, lighted by the kindled eye of expectation, she seemed to Peter to be made up of every creature's best. His grandmother smiled at him out of her warm placidity, and though Rose still drew his eyes to her, he was aware that she did not mean to question him.

"Electra has to go in town," he volunteered. "She won't be back. Perhaps not to-night."

"You must stay here with us, my dear," said Mrs. Grant. "Peter, have

her trunks moved into the west chamber."

Still the girl's eyes seemed to interrogate him, and Peter sat down in a chair and twined his long fingers in and out. He felt the drop in temperature ready to chill the voyager who, after the lonely splendor of the sea, returns to the earth as civil life has made it.

"We must remember she had n't heard of you," he assured Rose blunderingly, out of his depression.

"No. He had not written." She made the statement rather as that of a fact they shared together, and he nodded. "I am afraid it is unwelcome to her, the idea of me."

"She does n't know you," he assured her, in the same bungling apology. He expected her to betray some wound to her pride, but she only looked humble and a little crushed.

Grannie had apparently not heard, and she said now, with her lovely gentleness, —

"Don't you want to go upstairs, my dear, and be by yourself a little while? You have been traveling so far. We have noon dinner, you know. That will seem funny to you. Mary is getting it, but Peter will show you a room."

Peter found her bag in the wide hall, darkened from the sun, and went with her up the stairs. At the head she paused and beckoned him to the window-seat over the front door.

"Set it down there," she said rapidly, touching the bag with a finger. "Tell me, — how did she receive it?"

"What?"

"You know. The news of me."

"She was surprised."

"Naturally. But what else? She was shocked!"

"It was a shock, of course. In its suddenness, you know. You'd expect that."

She sank down in the window-seat and clasped her hands upon her knees, looking at them thoughtfully. Her brows were drawn together.

"Yes," she said, "yes. It was a shock. I see that. Well!" She looked up at him in a challenging directness before which he winced, conscious of the little he had to meet it with. "When am I to see her?"

"I am not sure when she is to be back."

"Ah! She won't come to me. Very well. I shall go to her." She laid her hand upon the bag, and rose, as if the interview were ended. Peter carried the bag in at the open door of her room, and after he had set it down, looked vaguely about him, as if arrangements might be bettered in the still, sweet place. She was smiling at him with an irradiating warmth.

"You're sorry, are n't you?" she said, from a comprehension that seemed a proffer of vague sympathy. "It makes you feel inhospitable. You need n't. You're a dear. Your grandmother is lovely — lovely."

Her praise seemed to Peter such a precious fruitage that the only thing, in delicacy, was to turn away and take it with him to enjoy. But she was calling him.

"Peter!"

He found her flushed and eagerly expectant, it seemed to him, as if his news had been uplifting to her. She looked at him, at the room, and rapidly from the window where the treetops trembled, all in one comprehensive sweep.

"Peter," she said, with conviction, "it's simply lovely here."

"It's a nice old place," responded Peter. He loved it from long use, but he was aware of its comfortable plainness.

"I never saw anything so dear. Those square worn tiles down by the front door, the fireplace, the curtains, — look, Peter, it's dotted muslin." She touched a moving fold, and Peter laughed outright.

"I like it," he said, "but there's nothing particular about it. If you want style, why, you'll have to look back at what you've left. When it comes to that, what's the matter with a château?"

"Yes, yes." She put the château aside with one of her light movements of the hands. "But here I feel as if I'd come home to something. You see it's so safe here, Peter. It's so darling, too, so intimate. I can't tell what I mean. If Electra would only like me — O Peter, I could be almost happy, as happy as the day is long!" As she said the old phrase, it seemed to her to fit into the scene. She looked not merely as if happiness awaited her, but as if she could almost put her eager finger on it. And there was Electra, not so many rods away, drawbridge up and portcullis down, inquiring, "Is she a grisette?" Afterwards it seemed to Peter as if his sympathy for the distressed lady went to his head a little, for he lifted her hand and kissed it. But he did not speak, save to himself, going down the stairs: —

"It's a damned shame!"

When he went out on the veranda, grannie made a smiling comment: —

"What a pretty child! Tom Fulton did well. He was a bad boy, was n't he, Peter?"

"Yes, grannie," said Peter, from the veranda rail where he sat picking rose leaves, "Tom was about the limit."

"Well! well! poor girl. Maybe it's as well he went while she knew only the best of him."

Peter was not sure she did know only the best, but he inquired, —

"Shall I have time to run down and see Osmond before dinner?"

"You'd better. He was here waiting when the carriage came. When he saw her, he slipped away."

"Rose?"

"Rose? Is that her name? Now is n't that pretty! Maybe you'll find him before you get to the plantation. I should n't wonder if he'd think it over and come back."

Peter did meet him in the lane lined with locusts on each side, walking doggedly back to the house. Some things the younger brother had forgotten about him, the beauty of the dark face that looked as if it had been cut out of rock, the extraordinary signs of strength, in spite of that which might have appealed to pity. Osmond had grown rugged with every year. His long arms, ending in the brown, supple hands, looked as if they were compact of sinewy potencies. And on his shoulders, heavier than Christian's burden, was that pack he must carry to the end of life. He saw his brother coming, and stopped, and Peter, as if to save him the sense of being looked at from afar, even by his own kin, ran to meet him. They did not take hands, but the older brother gave him a slap on the shoulder.

"Well, boy!" said he.

There were tears in Peter's eyes.

"Look-a-here," he cried, "I'm sniveling. Coming up to the house?"

"No. I've been there once this morning. You come back with me."

They turned about, and walked on through the lane. It led to the plantation; this was the nursery, here were the forcing beds, and all the beneficent growing things that had saved Osmond's life while he tended them, and also earned his bread for him, and Peter's bread and paints.

"Well, boy," said Osmond, "you've brought a girl with you. That was why I cut. Who is she?"

"Tom Fulton's wife, — his widow."

Osmond knew Electra very well. Some phases of her were apparent to him in his secluded life that her lover, under the charm of an epistolary devotion, had never seen.

"Does Electra know it?" he asked.

"I told her." Peter's tone added further, "Shut up, now!" and Osmond tacitly agreed.

"Coming down to dinner?" he asked safely.

"No, I must be back. I feel responsible for her — Rose. I brought her over.

In fact, I rather urged her coming. Grannie has asked her to stay with us until Electra is — at home."

"Is her name Rose?"

"Yes, — one of those creamy yellow ones. You must see her. She's a dear. She's a beauty, too."

"Oh, I've seen her, — one ear and a section of cheek and some yellow hair. Then I ran."

"For heaven's sake, man! what for?"

"She's one of those invincible Parisians. I've read about them."

Peter burst out laughing. Osmond's tone betrayed a terrified admiration.

"Do you eat down here with the men?" Peter was asking.

"Sometimes. I go up and eat with grannie once a day while she's alone. I shan't now."

"Why not?"

"You'll be here to keep her company, you and your Parisian. I've got to go on being a wild man, Pete. I shan't save my soul alive if I don't do that."

Peter put out a hand and laid it, for an instant, on his brother's arm.

"I don't know anything about your soul, old man," he said, with a moving roughness. "But if you like this kind of a life, you're going to have it, that's all. Who cooks the dinner?"

"Pierre. He came just after you went to France. There's a *pot-au-feu* to-day. I smelled it when I went by the kitchen. It's a good life, Pete, — if you don't want to play the game." His eyes grew wistful, something like the eyes of the dog that longs for man.

"If you don't play the game, I don't know who does."

"Well!" Osmond smiled a little, whimsically. "Maybe I do; but I play with counters."

Peter was not especially ready, save with a brush in his hand. He wanted to say something to the effect that Osmond was playing the biggest of all games, with the visible universe against him; but he hardly knew how to put it. It seemed, though, as if he might some time paint it

into a picture. But Osmond was recognizing the danger of soft implication, and bluffly turned the talk.

"Well, Pete, you've done it, have n't you?"

There was no possibility of affecting to misunderstand. Peter knew what he had gone to Paris for, five years ago, and why Osmond had been sending him the steady proceeds of the garden farm. He was to prove himself, take his talent in his hand and mould it and turn it about with a constant will, and shape a cup to hold the drink that makes the gods jealous and men delirious with adulation. Peter was to live at his ease in Paris, sparing nothing that would keep him well and strong of heart, so that he could paint the best portraits in the world. Peter knew he had begun to paint the best portraits in the world, because he had done many good ones and one actual marvel, and suddenly, as it sometimes is in art after we have been patient and discouraged, the whole task seemed to him a light and easy one. In his extraordinary youth he had the freshness of his brain, his quick eye and obedient hand, and he felt, lightly and gayly, that he was rich, — but rich in a world where there was plenty more of whatever he might lose.

"I guess so," he said, returning to the speech of his youth. "And I can do it twice, old man. I can do it a hundred times."

Osmond stopped and laid a hand on a boulder at the termination of their way, where the lane opened into ploughed fields. He looked off through the distance as if he saw the courts of the world and all the roads that run to fame. His eyes were burning. The hand trembled upon the rock.

"By George!" he said, "it's amazing."

"What is, Osmond?"

"It's amazing that the world can hold so much for one man. You would n't think there would be water enough in all the rivers for one man to drink so deep. What does Electra say?"

"About the painting? Nothing, yet."

"Did n't you speak of it? Why, you're covered with laurel, boy, like Jack-in-the-Green. She could n't help seeing it."

Peter, brought back to that amazing interview with the imperial lady, felt shamefaced in his knowledge of it.

"We did n't get to that," he said. "We were talking about Rose. Who do you think she is, Osmond?"

"Tom's widow. So you said."

"Yes, but what more? She's the daughter of Markham MacLeod."

He was watching Osmond narrowly, to weigh the effect of the name. But Osmond's face kept its impassive interest.

"You know who he is," Peter suggested.

"Yes, oh, yes! But that does n't mean anything to me. Nothing does until I see the man. He works with too big a brush. He is an agitator. He may be Christ or Anti-Christ, but he's an agitator. That's all I know. I can't give a snap judgment of a man that gets whole governments into a huff and knows how to lead a rabble a million strong. So he's her father?"

Peter, unreasonably irritated, pitched upon one word for a cause of war.

"Rabble? What do you mean by that? Labor?"

Osmond smiled broadly and showed his white teeth.

"I'm labor myself," he said. "You know that, boy."

"Then what do you want to talk so for? Rabble!"

"I only meant it in relation to numbers," said Osmond, again irritatingly, in his indifference to all interests outside his dear boy's home-coming. "I'll make it a rabble of kings, if you say so. Folks, Peter, that's what I mean, folks. He deals with them in the mass. That makes me nervous. I can't like it."

"He believes in the equality of man," Peter announced, as he was conscious, rather swellingly. "The downfall of kings, the freedom of the individual."

"There's the *pot-au-feu* smoking inside that shack," said Osmond, indicating a

shanty across the field. "Come and have dinner with labor."

But Peter turned. He shook his head.

"I can't, Osmond," he said. "I've brought this girl into the house, and I've got to see her through. Won't you come up to-night?"

"Not till your Parisian has gone over to Electra's. You come down here. Come down about dusk and we'll have another go."

As Peter hurried back, conscious of being a little late, he could have beaten his head against the locust trees for the stupidity of his home-coming. He had the shattered moment with Electra to remember, and now he had turned the other great meeting of the day into a fractious colloquy. Unformed yet vivid in his mind, for the last year, had been strong, determining anticipations of what would happen when he at last came home. He had known certainly what would happen when he saw Electra. She would still be the loveliest and best, and his would be the privilege of telling her so. And to Osmond, who had dug in the ground that Peter might work under the eye of men, he would return as one who has an account to give, and say, in effect, "You did it." But, laughably, neither of these things had happened. He forgot that he had in him the beginnings of a great painter in remembering that he had shown the obtuseness of an ass.

He did not see Electra that night. After the noon dinner he left Rose and grannie intimately together, — the girl, with a gentle deprecation, as if she brought gifts not in themselves worth much, talking about Paris, the air young Peter had been breathing, — and betook himself again to Electra's house. It was all open to the day, but no one answered his knock. He went in and wandered from parlor to library, the dignified rooms that had once seemed to him so typical of her estate as compared to his own: for in those days he had been only a young man of genius with scarcely enough money to live and study on, save as his brother earned it

for him. He sauntered in and out for an hour — it seemed as if even the two servants had gone — and then played snatches at the piano, to waken drowsy ears. But the house kept its quiet, and in the late afternoon he wandered home again. That evening he returned, and then there was some one to answer his knock. The maid told him Miss Electra had gone out; but though he waited in a fevered and almost an angry impatience, she did not return. Knowing her austere and literal truth, he could not believe that the denial was the conventional expedient, and in a wave of regret over the day, he longed for her inexpressibly. It seemed to him that no distance would be too great to bring him to her. He felt in events, and in himself also, the rushing of some force to separate them, and swung back, after his blame of her, into the necessity of a more passionate partisanship. When he went home, still without seeing her, he found his grandmother's house deserted. But the minute his foot sounded, there was a soft rush down the stairs. Rose stood beside him in the hall.

"Did you see her?" she asked breathlessly.

He strove to make his laugh an evidence of the reasonableness of what he had to answer.

"No. She was obliged to be away."

"Is n't she at home now?" asked the girl insistently. "She is there, and you refuse to hurt me. She won't see me!"

"She is not there," said Peter, in relief at some small truth to tell. "I have n't seen her since morning."

The girl stood there in the faint radiance of the hall lamp, her eyes downcast, thinking. She had dressed for dinner, though there was only high tea in the old-fashioned house, and delighted grannie beyond words. The old lady said it was as good as a play to her who never went out, to see a lovely dress trailing about the rooms. Peter, looking at the girl, felt his heart admonish him that here was beauty demanding large return of kindly

treatment from the world. Not only must justice be done her, but it must be done lavishly. This was for all their sakes. Electra could not be allowed to lose anything so precious, nor could he lose it either, his small share of tribute. She was speaking, still with that air of pondering: —

"I must do it myself. I must n't let you risk anything." Then she turned her full glance on him, and frankly smiled. "Good-night," she said, giving him her hand. "Don't speak of me to her. Don't think of me. I must do it all myself."

V

Next morning it was a different Rose he saw, quite cosy and cheerful at the breakfast-table, with no sign of tragedy on her brow. The day was fair, and the mood of the world seemed to him, for no reason, to have lightened. It was not credible that Electra, of all gracious beings, should sulk outside the general harmony. After breakfast, when Rose had, with a sweet air of service, given grannie her arm to the veranda chair, she returned to Peter, waiting, perhaps for a word with her, in the hall. His hat swung from his hand, and seeing that, she spoke in a low, quick tone.

"You are going over there. Don't do it."

"I must. I want to see her."

"I know. But not yet. Let me see her first. If you talk about me, it will make trouble between you, — not real trouble, perhaps, but something unfortunate, something wrong. I am going myself, now." She pointed out her hat and gloves where she had them ready, and without waiting for him to speak, began pinning on the hat. While she drew on the gloves she looked at him again with her charming smile. "Don't you see," she said, "we can get along better alone — two women? Which house is it?"

He followed her out and down the steps.

"I'll go part of the way with you."

She waved a gay farewell to grannie, busy already at her knitting, and they went down the path. But at the gate she paused.

"Now," she said, "which way? Which house?"

"The next one."

"I see. Among the trees. Now don't come. Whatever happens, don't come. If I am not here to dinner, — if I am never here. You simply must not appear in this. Good-by." She gave her parasol a little reassuring fling, as if it were a weapon that proved her amply armed, and took her swift way along the shaded road.

Peter stood for a moment watching her. She went straight on, and the resolution of her gait bore sufficient witness to her purpose. He turned about then and went rather disconsolately the other way, which would bring him out at the path to Osmond's plantation.

Rose, going up the garden path, came upon Electra herself, again dressed in white and among the flowerbeds. Whether she hoped her lover would come, and was awaiting him, her face did not tell; but she met Rose with the same calm expectancy. There was ample time for her to walk away, to avoid the interview, but Electra was not the woman to do that. False things, paltering things were as abhorrent to her in her own conduct as in that of another. So she stood there, her hands at her sides in what she would have called perfect poise, as Rose, very graceful yet flushed and apparently conscious of her task, came on. A pace or two away, she stopped and regarded the other woman with a charming and deprecatory grace.

"Do guess who I am!" she said, in a delightful appeal. "Peter Grant told you."

"Won't you come in?" returned Electra, with composure. "Mr. Grant did speak of you."

Rose felt unreasonably chilled. However little she expected, this was less, in

the just civility that was yet a repudiation. They went into the library where the sun was bright on rows of books, and Electra indicated a seat.

"Mr. Grant told me a very interesting thing about you," she volunteered, with the same air of establishing a desirable atmosphere.

"Yes," said Rose, rather eagerly. She leaned forward a little, her hands clasped on her parasol top. "Yes. I forbade him to say any more. I wanted to tell you myself."

Electra's brows quivered perceptibly at the hint of familiar consultation with Peter, but she answered with a responsive grace, —

"He told me the interesting fact. It is very interesting indeed. We have all followed your father's career with such attention. There is nothing like it."

"My father!" There was unconsidered wonder in her gaze.

Electra smiled agreeingly.

"He means just as much to us over here as he does to you in France — or England. Has n't he been there speaking within the month?"

"He is in England now," said Rose still wonderingly, still seeking to finish that phase and escape to her own requirements.

"Mr. Grant said you speak, at times."

"I am sorry he said that," Rose declared, recovering herself to an unshaded candor. "I shall never do it again."

Electra was smiling very winningly.

"Not over here?" she suggested. "Not before one or two clubs, all women, you know, all thoughtful, all earnest?"

Rose answered coldly.

"I am not in sympathy with the ideas my father talks about."

"Not with the Brotherhood!"

"Not as my father talks about it." She grew restive. Under Electra's impenetrable courtesy she was committing herself to declarations that had been, heretofore, sealed in her secret thought. "I want to talk to you," she said desperately, with the winning pathos of a

child denied, "not about my father, — about other things."

"This is always the way," said Electra pleasantly, with her immutable determination behind the words. "He is your father, and your familiarity makes you indifferent to him. There are a million things I should like to know about Markham MacLeod, — what he eats and wears, almost. Could n't you tell me what induced him — what sudden, vital thing, I mean — to stop his essay-writing and found the Brotherhood?"

Rose answered coldly, and as if from irresistible impulse.

"My father's books never paid."

Electra gazed at her, with wide-eyed reproach.

"You don't give that as a reason!"

Rose had recovered herself and remembered again the things she meant to leave untouched.

"No," she said, "I don't give it as a reason. I only give it."

Electra was looking at her, rebuffed and puzzled; then a ray shot through her fog.

"Ah," she said, "would n't it be one of the inconceivable things if we who have followed his work and studied him at a distance knew him better than you who have had the privilege of knowing him at first hand?"

In spite of herself, Rose answered dryly, —

"It would be strange."

But Electra had not heard. There was the sound of wheels on the drive, and she looked out, to see Madam Fulton alighting.

"Excuse me, one moment," she said.

"My grandmother has come home from town."

When Rose was alone in the room, she put her hand to her throat to soothe its aching. There were tears in her eyes. She seemed to have attempted an impossible task. But presently Electra was entering again, half supporting by the arm a fragile-looking old lady who walked inflexibly, as if she resented that aid.

Madam Fulton was always scrupulous in the appointments of her person; but this morning, with the slightly fagged look about her eyes and her careful bonnet a trifle awry, she disclosed the fact that she had dressed in haste for a train. But she seemed very much alive, with the alert responsiveness of those to whom interesting things have happened.

"I want my grandmother to be as surprised as I am," Electra was saying, with her air of social ease. "Grandmother, who do you think this is? The daughter of Markham MacLeod!" She announced it as if it were great news from a quarter unexplored and wonderful. Rose was on her feet, her pathetic eyes fixed upon the old lady's face. Madam Fulton was regarding her with a frank interest it consoled her to see. It was not, at least, so disproportioned.

"Dear me!" said the old lady. "Well, your father is a remarkable man. Electra here has all his theories by heart."

"I wish I had," breathed Electra, with a fervency calculated perhaps to distract the talk from other issues.

"How long have you been in America?" asked the old lady civilly, though not sitting down. She had to realize that she was tired, that it would be the part of prudence to escape to her own room.

"I have just come," said Rose, in a low, eloquent voice, its tones vibrating with her sense of the unfriendliness that had awaited her.

"And where are you staying? How did you drift down here?"

"At Mrs. Grant's — for the present." What might have been indignation warmed the words.

"Grandmother, you must be tired," said Electra affectionately. "Let me go to your room with you, and see you settled."

"Nonsense!" said the old lady briskly. "Nonsense! I'm going, but I don't need any help. Good-by, Miss MacLeod. I shall want to see you again when I have a head on my shoulders."

She had gone, and still Electra made

no sign of bidding her guest sit down again. Instead, she turned to Rose with an engaging courtesy.

"You will excuse me, won't you? I ought to go to grandmother. She is far from strong."

Rose answered quickly.

"Forgive me! I will go. But" — she had reached the door, and paused there entreatingly. "When may I see you again?"

"Grandmother's coming will keep me rather busy," said Electra, in her brilliant manner. "But I shall take great pleasure in returning your visit. Good-by."

Rose, walking fast, was out upon the road again, blind to everything save anger, against herself, against the world. She had come to America upon an impulse, a daring one, sure that here were friendliness and safety such as she had never known. She had found a hostile camp, and every fibre in her thrilled in savage misery. Half way along the distance home Peter came eagerly forward to her from the roadside where he had been kicking his heels and fuming. The visit to Osmond had not been made. At the plantation gate he had turned back, unable to curb his desire to know what had gone on between these two. At once he read the signs of her distress, the angry red in her cheeks, the dilated eye. Even her nostrils seemed to breathe defiance or hurt pride. She spoke with unconsidered bitterness.

"I ought never to have come."

"What was it? Tell me."

"It was nothing. I was received as an ordinary caller. That was all."

"Who received you?"

"She. Electra."

"What then?"

"I was presented to her grandmother as my father's daughter, not as her brother's — wife." She was breathless upon the word. All the color went out of her face. She looked faint and wan.

"But it could n't be," he was repeating. "Did n't you speak of Tom at all?"

"No."

"Did n't she?"

"No."

He essayed a bald and unreasonable comfort.

"There, you see! You did n't mention him, and Electra hardly brings herself to do it to any one. He never ceased being a trial to her. You must let me say that."

"Ah, that was n't it! Every time I might have spoken, a hand, a clever, skillful hand and cold as ice, pushed me away. I can never speak of it. She won't let me."

He was with her, every impulse of his eager heart; but a tardy conscience pulled him up, bidding him remember that other loyalty.

"Give her time," he pleaded. "It's a shock to her. Perhaps it ought not to be; but it is. Everything about Tom has always been a shock."

She, as well as he, remembered now that they spoke of Electra, whose high-bred virtues he had extolled to her in those still evenings on their voyage, when her courage failed her and he had opened to her the book of Electra's truth and justice.

"Do you think," she said wistfully, "I might stay at your grandmother's a few days more?"

"You are to stay forever. Grannie dotes upon you."

"No! no! But I shall have to think. I shall have to make my plans."

Again Peter felt yesterday's brand of anger against his imperial lady, or, he told himself immediately, the unfortunate circumstances of this misunderstanding. "You run on," he said. "Grannie's where you left her. If you don't feel like talking you can skip in at that little gate and the side door up to your room. I'm going back to see Electra."

"You must n't talk about me!"

"No!" He smiled at her in a specious reassurance, and went striding on over the path by which she had come.

Electra, in the fulfillment of her inten-

tion, had gone scrupulously to her grandmother's door, to ask if she needed anything, and then, when she had been denied, returned to the library, where she stood when Peter appeared on the threshold, as if she had been expecting him. He did not allow his good impulse to cool, but hurried forward to her with an abounding interest and a certainty of finding it fulfilled. As at first, when he had come to her in the garden the day before, he uttered her name eloquently, and broke out upon the heels of it, —

"I did n't see you all yesterday, after that first minute."

Electra looked at him seriously, and his heart sank. Peter had been thinking straight thoughts and swearing by crude values in these five years when he had lived with men and women who said what they meant, things often foolish and outrageous, but usually honest, and his mind had got a trick of asserting itself. None of the judgments it had been called upon to make seemed to matter vitally; but this one disconcertingly did, and to his horror he found himself wondering if Electra could possibly mean to be so hateful. Electra meant nothing of the kind. She had a pure desire toward the truth, and she assumed that Peter's desire tallied with her own. She felt very strongly on the point in question, and she saw no reason why he should not offer the greatest hospitality toward her convictions.

"Peter," she said at once, "you must not talk to me about that woman."

"So she said," Peter was on the point of irresistibly retorting, but he contented himself with the weak makeshift that at least gains time: —

"What woman?"

"Markham MacLeod's daughter."

"Tom's wife? Tom's widow?"

Electra looked at him in definite reproof.

"You must not do that, Peter," she warned him. "You must not speak of her in that way."

"For God's sake, why not, Electra?"

"That is not her title. You must not give it to her."

He stared at her for a number of seconds, while she met his gaze inflexibly. Then his face broke up, as if a hand had struck it. Light and color came into it, and his mouth trembled.

"Electra," he said, "what do you want me to understand?"

"You do understand it, Peter," she said quietly. "I can hardly think you will force me to state it explicitly."

"You can't mean it! no, you can't. You must n't imply things, Electra. You imply she was not married to him."

Still Electra was looking at him with that high demeanor which, he felt with exasperation, seemed to make great demands upon him of a sort that implied assumptions he must despise.

"This is very difficult for me," she was saying, and Peter at once possessed himself of one passive hand.

"Of course it is difficult," he cried warmly. "I told her so. I told her everything connected with Tom always was difficult. She knows that as well as we do."

"Have you talked him over with her?" The tone was neutral, yet it chilled him.

"Good Lord, yes! We've done nothing but talk him over from an outside point of view. When she was deciding whether to come here, whether to write you or just present herself as she has, — of course Tom's name came into it. She was Tom's wife, was n't she? Tom's widow?"

"No! no!" said Electra, in a low and vehement denial. "She was not." Peter blazed so that he seemed to tower like a long thin guidepost showing the way to anger. "I said the same thing yesterday."

"That was before you saw her. It means more now, infinitely more."

"I hope it does."

"Think what you're saying, Electra," he said violently, so that she lifted her hand slightly, as if to reprove him. "You refuse to receive her —"

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"I have received her, — as her father's daughter. I may even do so again."

"But not as your sister?"

"That would be impossible. You must see it is impossible, feeling as I do."

"But how, how? You imply things that dizzy me, and then, when it comes to the pinch, I can't get a sane word out of you." That seemed to him, as to her, an astonishing form of address to an imperial lady, and he added at once, "Forgive me!" But he continued irrepressibly, "Electra, you can't mean you doubt her integrity."

She had her counter question.

"Did you see them married?"

"No, no, heavens, no! Why, I did n't come on Tom in Paris until his illness. Tom never had any use for me. You know that. Meantime he'd been there a couple of years, into the mire and out again, and he'd had time to be married to Rose, and she'd had time to leave him."

"Ah, she left him! Why?"

"Why did you leave him, Electra, before he went over there? Why did you give up living in town, and simply retreat down here? You could n't stand it. Nobody could. Tom was a bad egg, Electra. I don't need to tell you that."

"It is certainly painful for me to hear it."

"But why, why, Electra? I can't stultify myself to prove this poor girl an adventuress. I can't canonize Tom Fulton, not even if you ask me."

"There are things we need not recur to. My brother is dead," said Electra, with dignity.

"Yes. That's precisely why I am asking you to provide for his widow."

"Suppose then this were true. Suppose she is what you say, — don't you feel she forfeited anything by leaving him?"

"Ah, but she went back, poor girl! She went back to him when he was pretty well spent with sickness and sheer fright. Tom did n't die like a hero, Electra. Get that out of your mind."

She put up both hands in an unconsidered protest.

"Oh, what is the use!" she cried; and his heart smote him.

"None at all," he answered. "But I mean to show you that this girl did n't walk back to any dead easy job when she undertook Tom."

"Why did she do it?"

"Why? From humanity, justice, honor, I suppose, the things that influence women when they stick to their bad bargains."

"Where had she been meantime?"

"With her father, in lodgings. That was where I met her."

"Was she known by my brother's name?"

"No," he hesitated, "not then. I knew her as Miss MacLeod."

"Ah!"

"I can see why," Peter declared, with an eager emphasis. "I never thought of it before, but can't you see? I should think a woman could, at least. The whole situation was probably so distasteful to her that she threw off even his name."

"And assumed it after his death!"

"No! no! She was called Madame Fulton at his apartment. I distinctly remember that."

They had been immovably facing each other, but now Electra turned away and walked back to the library table, where she stood resting one hand and waiting, pale and tired, yet unchanged. This seemed to her one of the times that try men's souls, but wherein a New England conscience must abide by its traditions.

"How long does she propose remaining?" she asked, out of her desire to put some limit to the distasteful situation, though she had forbidden herself to enter it with even that human interest.

"Why, as long as we ask her to stay, — you, or, if she is not to expect anything from you, I. She has nothing of her own, poor girl."

"Has her father repudiated her? That ought to tell something."

Peter was silent for a moment. Then he said in an engaging honesty, bound as it was to hurt his own cause, —

"I don't know. I don't understand their relation altogether. Rose gives no opinions, but I fancy she is not in sympathy with him."

"Yes, I fancied so."

"But we must n't fancy so. We must n't get up an atmosphere and look through it till we see distorted facts."

"Those are what I want, Peter, facts. If Miss MacLeod —"

"Do you mean you won't even give her your brother's name?"

"Even, Peter! What could be more decisive?"

"Do you expect me to introduce her as Miss MacLeod? Do you expect me to call her so?"

"I fancied you called her Rose."

"I did. I do. I began it in those unspeakable days when Tom went out of his head with fright and fever and we held him down in bed. Electra!"

She was listening.

"Was that grandmother calling?" she asked, though grandmother never yet had summoned her for companionship or service. But Electra felt her high decorum failing her. She was tired with the impact of emotion, and it was a part of her creed never to confess to weakness. She had snatched at the slight subterfuge as if it were a sustaining draught. "I am afraid I must go."

"Electra!" He placed himself before her with outstretched hands. Very simple emotions were talking in him. They told him that this was the second day of his return, that he was her lover, and he had not kissed her. And they told him also, to his sheer fright and bewilderment, that he did not want to kiss her. All he could ineffectually do was to reiterate, "We can't go on like this. Nothing in the world is worth it." Yet while he said it, he knew there was one thing at least infinitely worth while: to right the wrongs of a beautiful and misjudged lady. Only, it was necessary, apparently, for the

present, to keep the lady out of the question.

Electra was listening.

"It is grandmother," she said recklessly. "I must go."

There was a rustle up the staircase, and he was alone in the library, to take himself home as he might.

VI

After a week Electra had made no sign toward acceptance of the unbidden guest. She received Peter sweetly and kindly whenever he went to see her, but, he felt, they were very far apart. Something had been destroyed; the bubble of pleasure was broken and, as it seemed, for good and all. He strove to find his way back into their lost dream and take her with him; but there was no visible path. Rose spared him questions. She stayed gratefully on, and grannie was delighted with her. Rose had such a way of fitting into circumstance that it seemed an entirely natural thing to have her there, and Peter forgot to wonder even at the pleasure of it. Twice she came in from a walk pale and inexplicably excited, and he knew she had been besieging the scornful lady in the other house. But she kept her counsel. She had never seen Osmond since her coming, though she knew he and Peter had long talks together at the plantation.

One night, a cold, unseasonable one, Osmond was alone in the shack, his room unlighted save by the flaring wood. The cabin had a couch, two chairs, and a big table, this covered with books. There were books on the wall, and the loft above, where he slept when he was not in his neighboring tent, made a balcony, taking half the room. He was in his long chair stretched among the shadows, his face lighted intermittently from the fire. He was thinking deeply, his black brows drawn together, his nervous hands gripped on the elbows of the chair. There was a slight tap at the door. He did not heed it, being used to mice among the

logs and birds twittering overhead. Then the door opened, and a lady came in. Osmond half rose from his chair, and leaning forward, looked at her. He knew her, and yet strangely he had no belief that she was real. It was Rose, a long cloak about her, the hood slipped back from her rich hair. Her face was flushed by the buffeting of the wind, and its moist sweetness tingled with health. It was apparent to him at once that, as he was looking at her in the firelight, she also had fixed his face in the gloom. She was smiling at him, and her eyes were kind. Then she spoke.

"I came to see you, Mr. Osmond Grant."

Osmond was now upon his feet. He drew a chair into the circle of light.

"Let me take your cloak," he said. It seemed to him that no such exciting thing had ever happened.

"No, no. It is n't wet." She tossed it on the bench by the door, and having put both hands to her hair with the reassuring touch that is pretty in women, she turned to him, a radiant creature smiling out of her black drapery. "But I'll sit down," she said.

The next moment, he hardly knew how it was, they were there by the fire, and he had accepted her. She was beautiful and wonderful, a thing to be worshiped, and he lost not a minute in telling himself he worshiped her, and that he was going to do it while he was man and she was woman, or after his clay had lost its spirit. Osmond had very little time to think of his soul, because he worked all day in the open and slept hard at night; but it always seemed to him reasonable that he had one. Now it throbbed up, invincible, and he looked at the lady and wondered again at her. The lady was smiling at him.

"I wanted to meet you," she said, in her soft, persuasive voice. "You don't come to the house any more."

He answered her simply and calmly, with no token of his inward turmoil.

"I have n't been there for some days."

"Is it because I am there?"

"Grannie has n't needed me."

"Is it because I am there?"

Then he smiled at her, with a gleam of white teeth and lighted eyes.

"I've been a little afraid of you," he owned.

"Well, you're not now?"

"No, I'm not now."

"That's what I came here for." She settled more snugly into the chair, and folded her hands on her knee. He looked at them curiously, their slender whiteness, and noted, with interest, that she had no wedding ring. She continued, "I got breathless in the house. Grandmother was tired and went to bed. Peter has gone to see his cruel lady."

"Why do you call her cruel?"

"She won't hold out her hand to me."

That simple and audacious candor overwhelmed him. He had never known anything so facile yet direct. It made life incredibly picturesque and full of color. He laughed from light-heartedness, and it came into his head that, in her company, it would be easy to believe "as many as six impossible things before breakfast." But she was continuing: —

"Don't you find her cruel?"

"Electra? We have n't exchanged a dozen words in a year."

"Why not?"

"I'm not a notability. It's not remarkable to raise seeds for sale."

"But is n't she cruel?"

He thought a moment, and then answered gravely, —

"She is very opinionated. But she has high ideals. She would be unyielding. Has she been unyielding to you?"

"Has n't Peter told you?"

"Not a word."

"I came here expecting her to accept me as her brother's wife. She won't do it."

"Won't do it? Does she say so?"

"She says nothing. But she ignores me." Her cheek took on a deeper flush. She did not look at him, and he followed her gaze into the coals.

"You are too proud to give her proofs?" he hesitated.

She stirred uneasily in her chair.

"Proud!" she said bitterly. "If I had been proud, I should never have come here at all. But I am here, and she must recognize me." Some dauntless lines had come into the delicate face and made it older. "It is absurd," she continued, "worse. Here am I living in your house —"

"No! no!" he corrected her. "Not that it matters. It would be yours just the same. But it's grannie's house."

"Taking her hospitality, — oh, it's a shame! a shame!"

"Peter must make it right with Electra," he ventured.

"Peter! He has tried. He has tried too much. Things are not right between them any more. I know that."

Osmond, almost with no conscious will, went back to what he had been thinking when she came in.

"Peter belongs to your Brotherhood —"

"Don't say mine. It is my father's." She spoke with an unguarded warmth.

"But you belong to it, too."

"I used to. I used to do everything my father told me to, — but not now — not now!" She looked like a beautiful rebel, the color deepened in her cheeks, her eyes darkening.

Osmond could not question her, but he went back to his own puzzle.

"The trouble is — about Peter — his painting has taken a back seat. He talks about the Brotherhood — little else."

She nodded, looking at the fire.

"I know. I know."

"I've no objection to his believing in the brotherhood of man; but can't the brotherhood of man be preserved if we paint our pictures, and mind our own business generally?"

"Not while my father leads the procession. He will have no other gods before him."

"Tell me about your father."

She turned on him a face suddenly irradiated by fun. An unexpected dimple

came to light, and Osmond's pulse responded to it.

"Electra," she said, "found time to propose that I should give a little talk on my father. Last night I lay awake rehearsing it. Do you want to hear it? Markham MacLeod is the chief of spoilers. He preaches the brotherhood of man, and he gets large perquisites. He deals with enormous issues. Kingdoms and principalities are under his foot because the masses are his servitors. Money is always flowing through his hands. He does not divert it, but it has, with the cheerful consent of his followers, to take him from place to place, to shed his influence, to pay his hotel bills, — and he must live well, mind you. For he has to speak. He has to lead. He is a vessel of the Lord." She had talked on unhesitatingly, straight into the fire. Now, when she paused, Osmond commented involuntarily.

"How well you speak." Then as quickly, "Does your father know you think these things?"

"No," she answered. "I have not had occasion to tell him. Not yet! But about Peter." She faced round at him. "Peter is hypnotized by my father, as they all are in the beginning. He won't paint any more portraits while the spell lasts."

"Then he won't get Electra."

"He won't get her anyway, — not if he champions me. That's my impression."

"But what does your father want him to do?"

"Nothing, that I know. It is n't that he chokes people off from other channels. It's just that his yoke is heavy, for one thing, and that they can't do too much for him. Peter has taken him literally. He will sell all he has and give to the poor, and live on a crust. He'll think the chief, too, is doing it; but he'll be mistaken. The chief never denied himself so much as an oyster in his life."

They sat staring at each other, in the surprise of such full speech. Osmond had a sense of communion he had never

known. Peter and he had talked freely of many things in the last week, but here was a strange yet a familiar being to whom the wells of life were at once unlocked. The girl's face broke up into laughter.

"Is n't it funny?" she interjected, "our talking like this?"

"Yes. Why are we doing it?" He waited, with a curious excitement, for her answer. But she had gone, darting at a tangent on what, he was to find, were her graceful escapes when it was simpler to go that way.

"It's very mysterious here," she said, glancing about the cabin, "very dark and strange."

"Shall I throw on more wood?"

"If you like. I am not cold."

But he did not do it.

"You don't speak like a Frenchwoman," he ventured.

"I am not. You know that. I am an American."

"Yes; but you have lived in France."

"Always, since I was twelve. But I have known plenty of English, — Americans, too. Shall I speak to you in French?"

He deprecated it, with hands outspread.

"No, no. I read it, by myself. I could n't understand it, spoken."

She was smiling at him radiantly, and with the innocent purpose, even he, in his ecstasy, felt, of making herself more beautiful and more kind.

"Now," she was saying, "since we have met, you'll come to the house? You won't let me stand in the way?"

His tongue was dry in his mouth. He felt the beauty of her, the pang of seeing anything so sweet and having only the memory of it. Great instincts surged up in him with longings that were only pain. They seemed to embrace all things, the primal founts of life, the loyalties, devotions, hopes, and tragedies. At last he understood, not with his pulses only but his soul. And all the time he had not answered her. She was still looking at him,

smiling kindly now, and, he believed, not cognizant of the terror in his heart, not advertising her beauty as at first he had supposed. She seemed a friend home from long absence. He was speaking, and his voice, in his effort, sounded to him reassuringly gentle.

"We'll see."

"You will come?"

"We'll see."

"Good-night." She wrapped her cloak about her and was gone.

He followed her to the door only, and heard her feet upon the spongy turf. With his impulse to follow farther walked the sane certainty that he ought not to let her find her way alone, even along that friendly road. But he could not do it. The rain had ceased, and there was a moist wind blowing in little temperate gusts, as if it ran over the land and gave it something, and then took brooding interval for another breath. He looked up to heaven, and in the nebulous cloud reaches found a star. So seemed the creature who had dawned in his dark room and lighted it: inaccessible, unchangingly bright, and, if one rashly approached her, armed with a destroying fire.

He went out and sat down upon the bench at his door, turning to lean his forehead against the rough casing. What had happened to him? He did not even own it was the thing that happens to all, the unassuageable longing, the reaching hand for a mate. He had felt safe in his garden ground, where no blossoms opened but innocent velvet ones, temperately, to ripen and then die. But now the portals of the world were wide. He saw beauty, and it roused him to a rage of worship. As the night went on, he grew calmer. Sweet beliefs, a holier certainty stole into that ecstasy of meeting. She seemed again, as she had in one moment of her stay, a dear friend happily returned. The sense of her familiarity was as convincing as if he had known her all his life. It was not recognition alone: it was reunion.

VII

Osmond tried to cease thinking of the beautiful lady until his mind should be more at ease, and to consider Peter, who was acting like a changeling. It seemed possible that he might have to meet his boy bravely, even sharply, with denial and admonition. Peter, he knew, had deliberately put his wonderful gift in his pocket, and under some glamour of new desire, was forgetting pictures and playing at the love of man. Playing at it? Osmond did not know; but everything seemed play to him in the divergences of a man who had a gift and stinted using it. If Osmond had had any gift at all, he knew how different it would have made his life. A tragedy of the flesh would have been slighter to a man who felt the surge of fancy in the brain. He had nothing, at the outset, but a faltering will and a deep distaste for any task within his reach. He remembered well the day when he first found Peter had that aptitude for painting, and realized, with the clarity of great revealings, what it meant to them both. All through his boyhood Peter had been drawing with a facile hand, caricatures, fleeting hints of homely life, but always likenesses. One day he came home from the post-office in a gust of rapture. A series of random sketches had been accepted by a journal. From that time the steps had led always upward, and Osmond climbed them with him. But the day itself, — Osmond remembered the June fervor of it when, after a word or two to the boy, surprising to Peter in its coldness, he went away alone and threw himself under an apple tree, his face in the grass, to realize what had come. His own life up to this time had seemed to him so poor that the hint of riches dazzled him. He saw the golden gleam, not of money, but of the wealth of being. Peter had the gift, but they would both foster it. Peter should sleep softly and live well. He should have every luxurious aid, and to that end Osmond would learn to wring out money from the

ground. That was his only possibility, since he must have an outdoor life. Then he began his market-gardening. Grandmother was with him always. She even sold a piece of land for present money to put into men and tools, and the boy began. At first there were only vegetables to be carried to the market; then the scheme broadened into plants and seeds. He was working passionately, and so on honor, and his works were wanted. To his grandmother even he made no real confidence, but she still walked with him like a spirit of the earth itself. He knew, as he grew older, how she had drained herself for him, how she had tended him and lived the hardest life with him because he needed it. There were six months of several years when she took him to the deep woods, and they camped, and she did tasks his heart bled to think of, as he grew up, and looked at her workworn hands; but those things which bound them indissolubly were never spoken of between them. His infirmity was never mentioned save once when, a boy, and then delicate, he came in from the knoll where he had been watching the woodsmen felling trees. His face was terrible to her, but she went on getting their dinner and did not speak.

"Grannie," he said at last, "what am I going to do?"

She paused over her fire, and turned her face to him, flushed with heat and warm with mother love.

"Sonny," she said, "we will do the will of God."

"Did He do this to me?" the boy asked inflexibly.

She looked at the mountain beyond the lake, whence, she knew, her strength came hourly.

"The world is His," she said. "He does everything. We can't find out why. We must help Him. We must ask Him to help us do His will."

Then they sat down to dinner, and the boy, strengthening his own savage will, forced himself to eat.

He did not think so much about the ways of God as shrewdly, when he grew older, of toughening muscles and hardening flesh. Peter's talents, Peter's triumphs, became a kind of possession with him. Osmond had perhaps his first taste of happiness when Peter went abroad, and Osmond knew who had sent him and who, if the market-garden throve, had sworn to keep him there. The allowance he provided Peter thereafter gave him as much pleasure in the making as it did the boy in the using of it. Peter was like one running an easy race, not climbing the difficult steps that lead to greatness. It looked, at times, as if it were the richness of his gift that made his work seem play, — not Osmond's fostering. But now, coming home to more triumphs, Peter seemed to have forgotten the goal.

He found Osmond one morning resting under the apple tree, his chosen shade. Peter strode up to the spot moodily, angrily even, his picturesque youth well set off by the ease of his clothes. Osmond watched him coming and approved of him without condition, because he saw in him so many kinds of mastery. Peter gave him a nod, and threw himself and his hat on the grass, at wide interval. He quoted some Latin to the effect that Osmond was enjoying the ease of his dignified state.

"I've been up and at it since light," said Osmond, smiling at him. "You don't know when sun-up is."

Peter rolled over and studied the grass.

"Are you coming up to see Rose?" he asked presently.

Osmond could not tell him Rose had been to see him.

"I might," he said, remembering her requisition.

"Come soon. Maybe you could put an oar in. She needs help, poor girl!"

"Help to Electra's favor?"

Peter nodded into the grass.

"You could do it better than I. You can do everything better. You must n't

forget, Pete, that you're the Fortunate Youth."

There was something wistful in his tone. It stirred in Peter old loyalties, old responses, and he immediately wondered what Osmond wanted of him that was not expressed. Osmond had made no emotional demands upon him, as to his profession, but Peter always had a sense that his brother was sitting by, watching the boiling of the pot. This was a cheerful companionship when the pot was active; not now, as it cooled. He threw out a commonplace at random, from his uneasy consciousness.

"Art is n't the biggest thing, old boy."

"What is?"

Now Peter rolled over again, and regarded him with glowing eyes. To Osmond, who was beginning to know his temperament better than he had known it in all the years of the lad's journey upon an upward track, that glance told of remembered phrases and a dominating personality that had made the phrases stick.

"It's to give one man who works with his hands fresher air to breathe, fewer hours' work, a better bed."

"You're an artist, Pete. Don't forget that."

"I don't. But it is n't the biggest thing."

"If you should paint a picture for that workingman to look at while he says his prayers? what then?"

"You don't understand, Osmond," said the boy. "Labor! Labor is the question of the day."

Osmond looked over at a field of seedlings where five men with bent backs were weeding and where he himself had been bending until now. He smiled a little.

"I understand work, boy," he said gently. "Only I can't make hot distinctions. The workingman is as sacred to me as you are, and you are as sacred as the workingman."

Peter was making little nosegays of

grass and weeds, and laying them in methodical rows.

"I can't paint, Osmond," he said abruptly. "These things are just crowding me."

"What things?"

"Capital. Labor."

Osmond was silent a long time because he had too many things to say, all of them impossible. He felt hot tears in his eyes from a passion of revolt against the lad's wastefulness. He felt the shame of such squandering. To him, all the steps in the existence by which his own being had been preserved meant thrift and penury. He had conserved every energy. He had lived wholesomely, not only for months, but unremittingly for years. His only indulgences had been the brave temperate ones of air and sleep; and with their aid he had built up in himself the strength of the earth. And here was a creature whose clay was shot through with all the tingling fires of life, whose hand carried witchery, whose brain and eye were spiritual satellites, and he talked about painting by and by.

"What a hold that man has on you!" he breathed involuntarily.

Peter swept his little green nosegays into confusion and sat up. His eyes were brilliant.

"Not the man," he said. "It's not the man. It's the facts behind him."

Osmond's thought flew back to one night, and a girl's reckless picture of her father. It seemed now like a dream, yet it swayed him.

"What can you do for him?" he asked, forcing himself to a healthy ruthlessness. "What have you done?"

"For Markham MacLeod? Nothing. What could I do for him? He has done everything for me."

"What, Pete?"

"Opened my eyes. Made me realize the brotherhood of man. Why, see here, Osmond!"

Osmond watched him, fascinated by the heat of him. He seemed possessed

by a passion which could never, one would say, have been inspired save by what was noble.

"You know what kind of a fellow I've been: all right enough, but I like pleasures, big and little. Well, when I began to listen to MacLeod, I moved into a garret the poorest student would have grumbled at. I turned in my money to the Brotherhood. The money I got for the portrait — maybe I should n't have asked such a whacking big price if I had n't wanted that money — I turned that in to the Brotherhood. Would a fellow like me sleep hard and eat crusts for anything but a big thing? Now I ask you?"

Osmond sat looking at him, and thinking, thinking. This, he understood perfectly, was youth in the divinity of its throes over life, life wherever it was bubbling and glowing. Always it was the fount of life, and where the drops glittered, there the eyes of youth had to follow, and the heart of youth had to go. The exact retort was rising to his lips: "That was my money, the money you gave away. I earned it for you. I dug it out of the ground." But the retort stayed there. He offered only what seemed a blundering remonstrance: "I can't help feeling, Pete, that it's your business to paint pictures. If you can paint 'em and give the money to your Brotherhood, that's something. Only paint 'em."

"But you know, I've found out I can speak."

There it was again, the heart of youth on its new track, chasing the glow, whatever it might be, the marsh-lamp or star. Osmond shook his head.

"I don't know, Pete," he owned. "I don't know. I'm out of the world. I read a lot, but that's not the same thing as having it out with men. But I feel a distinct conviction that it's every man's business to mind his own business."

"You would n't have us speak? You would n't have him, Markham MacLeod?"

The boy's impetuosity made denial seem like warfare. Osmond put it aside with his hand.

"Don't," he said. "You make me feel like Capital. I'm Labor, lad. I always have been."

"Is n't it anything to move a thousand men like one? To say a word and bring on a strike of ten thousand? The big chieftains never did so much as that. Alexander was n't in it. Napoleon was n't. It's colossal."

"I don't know whether it seems to me very clever to bring on a strike," said Osmond. "It would seem to me a great triumph to make ten thousand men feel justly. Resistance is n't the greatest thing to me. I should want to know whether it was noble to resist."

"Ah, but it is noble! Resistance, — for themselves, their children, their children's children."

Osmond was looking away at the horizon, a whimsical smile coming about the corners of his mouth.

"Yes, Pete," he said, "but you paint your pictures."

"Now you own I'm right! Is n't it anything to move ten thousand men to throw down their tools and go on strike?"

"Well, by thunder!" Osmond had awakened. "Now you put it that way, I don't know whether it is or not. That phrase undid you. Lay down their tools? Show me the man that makes me take up my tools in reverence and sobriety, because good work is good religion. That's what I'd like."

"But it means something, — starvation, maybe, death. You don't recognize it, do you? You won't recognize the war that's on — oh, it is on! — between Capital and Labor, between the high places and the low. It's war, and it's got to be fought out."

"I do recognize it, lad." He spoke gently, thinking of his own lot, and the hard way through which he had come to his almost fevered championship of whatever was maimed or hurt. "Only,

Pete, do you know what your opposing forces need? They need grannie."

"To say it's the will of God?"

"To be wheeled out in her chair, and sit at the head of your armies and say, 'Love God. Love one another.' If they love God, they'll listen to Him. If they love one another your strikes will end to-morrow, and your rich man will break bread with your poor one, and your poor one will lose hatred for the rich. You need grandmother."

They sat smiling over it. Peter had amazingly cooled. He rose to his feet.

"Well," he said, "I'll paint some pictures. Of course I'll paint my pictures, — sometime. There's the Brotherhood again. Don't I want to turn in shekels? Don't I want to have it known that such weight as my name carries is going in there?"

It was Osmond's turn to rage. He, too, rose, and they confronted each other. Osmond spoke. His voice trembled, it seemed with emotion that was not anger but a fervor for great things.

"I cannot get it through my head. You can do the thing, and it's I that value it. You can paint pictures and you'd prostitute the thing for money, — for reputation. If I had it, if I had that gift—" he paused, and shook his head

as if he shook a mane. Peter was looking at him curiously. This was passion such as he had never seen in any man.

"What would you do, old chap?" he asked.

Osmond was ashamed of his display, but he had to answer.

"I would guard it," he said, "as a man would guard — a woman."

They stood silent, their eyes not meeting now, hardly knowing how to get away from each other. As if she had been evolved by his mention of precious womanhood, Electra, in her phaëton, drove swiftly by. They took off their hats, glad of the break in the moment's tension; but she did not turn that way.

"Could she be going to see her?" Peter asked, in haste.

"To see her?"

"Rose. She must n't go now. Rose has gone to the orchard with her book."

He started straightway across the field, and met Electra, returning. As he was standing in the roadway, hat off, smiling most confidently at her, Electra had no resource but to draw up. Before she fairly knew how it had come about, he was beside her, and they were in a proximity for the most intimate converse. Electra felt irritably as if she could not escape.

(To be continued.)

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

A LETTER FROM DR. HOLMES

IN 1874, I gathered all the facts that I could about the beginning of the *Atlantic* and published them in the *Christian Union*, now the *Outlook*. I derived my information from Mr. Lowell, Dr. Holmes, Mr. Underwood and others, and as Mr. Lowell had said that Dr. Holmes made the *Atlantic*, I sent what I had written to the Autocrat.

Dr. Holmes replied in a letter which seems to me to be so characteristic and so interesting that I venture to send it to the Contributors' Club.

296 Beacon St.,
BOSTON, Oct. 29th, 1874.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have read your story of the birth of the *Atlantic* with great pleasure. It recalls many most agreeable times, scenes and persons, and leaves me cheerful as I rise from reading it, in spite of the reflection forced upon me of how many years have gone like the snow in which we left our footprints as we walked towards Harvard Square after the memorable supper at Porter's.

The success of my papers was a surprise to me. I was, as you say in your paper, forty-eight years old, and felt that a new generation of writers and readers had grown up since I used to write for the *Collegian*, and the *New England Magazine*. I remembered what Johnson said of Goldsmith, that "he was a plant which flowered late" — and Goldsmith was but forty-six years old when he died. I think, however, something was beginning to stir in me for expression before I felt the spur of this new stimulus. You will find in the *North American* for April, 1857, an article entitled "Mechanism of Vital Actions," which had more thought in it than anything I had previously published. There is a poem also of the date

of 1857, written for the meeting of the Alumni, which has I think more vivacity than my average ones. I remember Hillard's meeting me and speaking of these two productions, different as they were, in a way that gave me great satisfaction. I think therefore the *Atlantic* came for my fruit just as it was ripe for gathering, but I never knew it was so until afterwards.

I thought you might like to know all this directly from me. It seems very strange to me, as I look back and see how everything was arranged for me, as if I had been waited for as patiently as Kepler said the Almighty had waited for him. But so the least seems sometimes to be cared for as anxiously as the greatest — "are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall."

If I had been the sparrow that fell in the earlier part of 1857, the world might have lost very little, but I should have carried a few chirps with me that I had rather have left behind me. I have had some hard things said of me since I began writing for the *Atlantic*. But the change in public opinion since 1857 is something astonishing, and the last time I saw myself alluded to, it was as being rather conservative in my tendencies. . . .

I have sent you a gossip letter in reply to your note and the article that has so much interested me, but . . . I hope you will read it goodnaturedly.

Very truly yours,
O. W. HOLMES.

MR. ARTHUR GILMAN
Cambridge.

TICKNOR AND FIELDS AND THE OLD SOUTH CLOCK

I do not keep a diary. I know how terrifying I might be to my friends — and enemies — if I did. I know, also,

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what a bore a diary is when published, and one feels forced to read it, because, perchance, something of interest *may* be found. How do we wade through dreary wastes of "Rainy day," "Walked to Grant's tomb," "Grievously exercised with the mumps," and many another item that might have had interest to the writer of a few years gone by, or of a century distant.

Though I do not keep a diary, and am in no danger of developing into a Pepys, charming old rascal! yet on occasion I record facts that interest me, for my personal gratification. For instance, on the evening of Wednesday, November 4, 1874, I made such a record of fact. I had been asked by a lady of Boston to "assist" at a meeting in her Beacon Hill parlors, — her "salon," shall I say? After the literary exercises proper on such occasions in Boston, there was the usual standing-up conversation, and the subject of the *Atlantic Monthly* came up. You remember that in its extreme youth the magazine was transferred from the publishing house of Phillips and Sampson, to whose enterprise it owed its existence, to that of Ticknor and Fields, then occupying the "Old Corner Book-store" on School Street, on the corner of Washington, just a little farther down town than the Old South Church. The late governor Alexander H. Rice told me on that November evening how the transfer was made. The original publishers had failed, and Mr. Rice was their assignee, upon whom rested the responsibility of settling the business. The *Atlantic* was a valuable part of the assets, of course, and Mr. Rice said that he sent letters to a dozen different publishers telling them that he would sell it to the highest bidder whose offer should be received by noon on a certain day. The day arrived and not one bid had come. Mr. Rice walked over to the office of Ticknor and Fields, and said to Mr. Ticknor, "I have not yet received your bid for the *Atlantic*." "No," replied the publisher, "and you will not, for we don't care to

undertake the responsibility of the venture." In point of fact, Mr. Rice told me, the risk was not great, for the circulation at the time stood at thirty thousand copies.

Mr. Rice was not to be put off in this cavalier fashion. He pointed to the clock on the Old South, and it was after half past eleven. "I am about to go to my office to open the bids," said he, "and I am sure that Ticknor and Fields will be sorry if I find none there from them." Mr. Ticknor was apparently immovable, Mr. Fields was in Europe. Mr. Rice continued his appeals. The hands of the old clock kept on their way, and soon they indicated five minutes of twelve. Then Mr. Rice made his last effort, and Mr. Ticknor turned to his desk and wrote a line on a piece of paper, handing it to the governor, sealed. Mr. Rice carried it to his office, and solemnly proceeded to open it. It was the only bid, and the sum mentioned was ten thousand dollars. Mr. Rice went at once to Mr. Ticknor again, and said "The *Atlantic* is yours!" Mr. Ticknor was startled, and replied, "Pray let no one know what I bid, for all my friends would think me crazy!" The brilliant history of the magazine during the period of the ownership of the honored house of Ticknor and Fields shows at once how little publishers are able to forecast the future, and how difficult it is to estimate the value of literary assets. Doubtless Mr. Ticknor thought when he handed his little slip of paper to Governor Rice that he had made a bid so modest that he was in no danger of having it accepted, and it seems equally sure that when he found that no other publisher had bid so high as he, he was alarmed lest he had made a deplorable exhibition of a lack of business acumen.

THE ATLANTIC'S PLEASANT DAYS IN TREMONT STREET

My first knowledge of the making of the *Atlantic* was in the last years of Mr. Fields's editorship and of his connection

with the house of Ticknor and Fields, or, as it was at his retirement, Fields, Osgood and Co. The office was his private room at 124 Tremont Street, one of the spacious dwelling-houses, of an earlier generation, in that street, which business had of a sudden absorbed and in some sort reconstructed. His was the smaller front room on the second floor, — the larger, in which Mr. Aldrich, as editor of *Every Saturday*, had his desk, was a general reception-room, — with one window looking upon Tremont Street, and another upon Hamilton Place. It was a cheerful little room, with an open fire, opposite to which was a sofa for visitors, with prints, mostly portraits, upon the walls, and Mr. Fields's standing desk in one corner, on which lay an always open book in which from time to time he noted appointments of all sorts, and every other thing, no matter how trifling, that he wished to remember, the recent pages being always carefully examined more than once in a day. This habit, among others, made him one of the most dependable persons I have ever known. He never forgot an engagement of any kind or the slightest promise, and he was punctuality itself. The thing in the room which at once attracted the attention of every visitor with the least artistic sense, was a cabinet picture — a jester and dwarf — by Zamacois, which hung over the sofa, and glorified the whole place. Two of this brilliant young Spaniard's works had found their way to America not long before, and one of them had been bought by Dickens, the other by Ticknor and Fields. The broad window seats were covered with MSS., while on the floor below were piled books sent to the magazine. Mr. Howells, the assistant editor, did his work, the greater part of the actual editorial labor, at his home in Cambridge or at the University Press. Mr. Fields was at that time unable to use his hand in writing, and dictated his letters, beside requiring other assistance. Between whiles, I was set to weed out the MSS., so that the hopeless need not be

sent to Cambridge. Typewriters had not come to save editorial eyes, and, to my inexperience, a large part of the effusions were at first more or less illegible, while the number written with pale ink on thin paper and rolled, seemed painfully large. When I kept an exact account in later times, the number of MSS. received from year to year hardly varied, and I should judge that it was much the same in those days, for if there were fewer writers there were fewer magazines. The volume of stories was large, but the "dialect story," so-called, was then inconspicuous, and chiefly represented by rural New England tales and fishing-village sketches. The wild west was hardly in evidence, and there were not many war stories. It was too near to write easily of, — what there were usually came from Northern pens. There were certainly as many verses as to-day, with the same tendency toward a widespread outburst of rhyme on any sensation of the hour.

But it is impossible to say much about that room without speaking particularly of Mr. Fields, the gracious host of more distinguished visitors than any other *Atlantic* office can have known. Like all men who have risen to an enviable position without extraneous aid of any sort, Mr. Fields had detractors and unfriends who were willing to magnify any little foible or affectation; but I, — and I only speak of myself by way of illustration, — coming to him very young and self-distrustful, suddenly faced with the problem of earning a living, and fully conscious of no training for that end, shall be thankful and grateful to the last day of my life, that at the outset I fell into such kind, considerate hands. I knew that I often did badly, I know it better now, but there was never a word of blame or even a look of annoyance, while for anything that could by any possibility be commended, praise was never lacking. Always there was thoughtful courtesy and a pleasant humor making dull tasks easy. No one could have

been gentler or more sympathetic to the procession of literary aspirants who found their way to him, though he firmly refused to be bored beyond reasonable limits, and seemed to have discovered the secret of the inclined plane for lingering visitors which Dr. Holmes longed for, the inclination as imperceptible to most as it was efficacious. Love of literature was as genuine and heartfelt a feeling in him as in any one I have ever known. Not a writer — in any literary sense — he had an unbounded and generous appreciation of the literary gifts of others, and was even willing, not once or twice, to publish to his own loss that which he felt was good. And it should be said that his judgment as to the commercial success of any venture was usually excellent, so far as any one can judge in such matters, and that he was a very shrewd and competent man of business, one not in the least likely to be imposed upon or self-deceived in a question of affairs. I remember his speaking to me in those days and later of the deterioration in the taste of American readers which he believed had set in after the war. Before, he declared, any good edition of a good book was almost sure of at least a fair sale, — a surety which seemed to have quite passed away. There were many more readers, but the best books were less read.

As I look back on those few years nothing impresses me so much as the good spirits, even the gayety, that pervaded the establishment. I think it was a very prosperous time for the *Atlantic*, loyally supported as it was by the best writers in the country, and with practically hardly a rival in its own kind; while business flourished amain. (I believe it was an era of general prosperity, too much founded on paper money and other unwholesome conditions to be lasting.) The members of the house, Mr. Aldrich, Mr. Anthony, the art manager, Mr. Howells when in town; and frequent guests, used to have a luncheon every day (brought in from the Parker House,

I think) in an upstairs room. This must have been a particularly cheerful board, — certainly those who sat round it could make it so. As for the visitors in Mr. Fields's little room, I remember one day when Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, and Whittier were all crowded together there, when the portly figure of Mr. Bayard Taylor blocked the doorway, and it was decided to seek seats and space in the larger room. Visitors such as these need not be described, — that has been done so often and sometimes so well, that I could scarcely presume to give my superficial and superfluous impressions, though I can say that for brilliant, suggestive, entertaining, pungent, and humorous talk, no one of them, not even Dr. Holmes, nor any other man of letters whom I have met, could be compared to Lowell. How pleasant it is to remember the speech of these older writers, English undefiled, with never a hint of an American or any other accent. It would have been recognized as faultless speech by a true and cultivated ear in any English-speaking land. Thinking of it, one feels that Lowell had reason for saying — and who had so much right to say it — that he believed that nowhere was purer English spoken than by the well-trained in and about his birthplace.

Among the occasional visitors at that time was Mr. Motley, who was then living in Park Street. I had heard his contemporaries speak of his youthful beauty and brilliant gifts, and I had a school-girlish enthusiasm for his histories. It was not a case where any disillusion need be feared, in personal attractiveness, manner or conversation. His thoughts were apparently completely occupied by the presidential election, in which he took an almost passionate interest. "I cannot sleep," he declared one day, "my mind is so full of it." "And if Grant should not be elected?" said Mr. Fields. "Ah," he returned, with intense feeling, "that is a calamity that is unthinkable!" This remembrance makes still more painful the story of what came afterward.

Charles Sumner I recall, seeming to fill the small room with his commanding stature and heavy voice, leaving upon me the impression chiefly of a portentous literalness, and a lack of humor almost phenomenal. The most stimulating and interesting of talkers, after Mr. Lowell, was certainly Mr. Henry James, Senior, whose keen perceptiveness and caustic wit sometimes half concealed his sensitive depth of feeling. There were the clergymen whose parishes may have been said to extend throughout the country, and who were also men of letters, — Dr. A. P. Peabody, Dr. James Freeman Clarke, whose very names are to those who knew them like a benediction, and Dr. Edward Everett Hale. The great Boston preacher of that time, Dr. George Putnam, of the First Church, Roxbury, to hear whom Mr. Fields sometimes took his guests, was solely and entirely a preacher, — his printed sermons give but a hint of his power, — and I never saw him in the office but once. Mr. Fields had told me that he had taken Thackeray to the old Roxbury Church years before, and when Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Stephen were paying him a brief visit he took her there. "I never knew before what preaching could be," she said when the service was over, which reminded her host of her father's words in the same place (of which she knew nothing): "It seems to me that I have heard preaching for the first time in my life."

A copy of the *Overland Monthly* had fallen into my hands, and I was exceedingly interested in a sketch, "The Luck of Roaring Camp," by an author whose name I had never before heard. I asked Mr. Fields to read it, and he cared more for it even than I, — being much older and wiser, — and very soon dictated a letter to Mr. Harte, begging him to send something to the *Atlantic* (whose editors, so far as I have known them, have always anxiously watched for promising new authors). The reply, which came in due time, I think, not only expressed a willingness to become a contributor, but

spoke of the writer's probable departure from California. I cannot say how long it was before the Harte family reached Boston and became the guests of Mr. Howells in Cambridge. I only know that it was the time when every man was quoting from "The Heathen Chinee," and generally carrying the verses in his pocket-book. There was, I thought, a good deal of curiosity felt about the office as to the sort of man the suddenly popular author would prove to be. He was found good-looking (and exceedingly well-dressed), extremely self-possessed, with a gracefully friendly and even affectionate manner to the new business and literary acquaintances of his own age in the establishment, with whom he speedily became intimate. Mr. Fields told me that the only occasion when he had seen Bret Harte's cool self-poise disturbed was when he took him to visit Longfellow. That beautiful, gracious presence, the dignified, historic house, and the remembrance of the tragedy those rooms had seen, deeply impressed the visitor, — "actually took him down a bit," were I think the real words used. All my recollections of intercourse with Mr. Harte then or later are agreeable. It would always be so, I fancy, when the intercourse did not include business or pecuniary engagements.

As I recall those pleasant rooms in Tremont Street, it seems as though they were always full of sunshine (they really had a northern exposure), as if the cheerfulness that pervaded them had left a visible brightness in the memory. There could not be grayness or dullness with Mr. Fields, Mr. Aldrich, and Mr. Osgood in possession, and the constant visitor, who, the chances were, would be wise or witty, or both. Literary bores and cranks of course found their way there in considerable numbers, but they only appeared to give the needed relief. And much work was done, but nimbleness of spirit seemed to give quickness and deftness to head and hand. I think clouds and rain began to come when Mr.

Fields retired. Perhaps he took from the house, besides more material things, a desirable element of conservatism and wise caution. For six months thereafter he retained the headship of the magazine, when Mr. Howells became sole editor, and there was no longer a Boston office. Mr. Fields still retained his room, though he was in it less, and it was still a resort for friends old and new. But there was a change in the atmosphere of the establishment, — new enterprises proved costly, and necessarily, at their outset, unremunerative, and possibly times were changing everywhere; then came the calamity of the Great Fire. The *Atlantic Monthly* was sold to Messrs. Hurd and Houghton, and until that house united with that of J. R. Osgood and Co., I knew nothing save by hearsay of the making of the magazine. There was no special difference in it, except in the adoption of the Webster orthography. I remember my anguish when, on opening the first number issued with the new imprint, my eye lighted on the word *mold* (mould). On making my moan to Mr. Howells, who of course had nothing to do with the matter, I got little sympathy, he being a reformer on principle. But it must have been more or less an annoyance to some of the typical *Atlantic* writers, judging by the care they took that their books should be spelled in the old way. Had not the Autocrat in one of the earliest numbers of the *Monthly*, placed "a correct habit of spelling the English language" among the qualities which perhaps gave Boston a right to look down on the mob of cities; and the only time I ever saw Mr. Longfellow show a feeling even remotely akin to

anger, was when, at a later time, he discovered in a cheap, popular edition of his poems the word *traveler*. It was not in the poems themselves, but in a press notice, printed among others at the end of the book; nevertheless it was corrected and apologized for.

From the pleasant quarters in Tremont Street the house moved to Winthrop Square, and never again till it reached Park Street did it know the comforts of home, so to speak, — it had only business offices. The whole quarter of the city where the new building stood was in a chaotic state, — rising from its ashes would, I suppose, be the proper expression. At that time came the consolidation of J. R. Osgood and Co., with Hurd and Houghton, of course bringing back the *Atlantic* and some of my old work therein. But there was no real *Atlantic* office in that building, which one winter night was burned to the ground. Many *Atlantic* MSS. were burned with it, — how many I never exactly knew, for the book where they were recorded went too. So far as I could recollect them, I wrote to the possible contributors of their loss, and as I remember, with very few exceptions, they behaved exceedingly well, though very few of them seemed to have kept copies even of poems.

It was with a new name, Houghton, Mifflin and Co., that the house came to Park Street. Here Mr. Howells on his weekly visits had the use of a small, dark room, which was certainly never considered an *Atlantic* office. That came with Mr. Aldrich's assumption of the editorship, the first office of the magazine in Boston since the Tremont Street days.